



Event: Press conference

Speaker/s: Premier David Crisafulli, Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie, Attorney-General Deb Frecklington, Minister Ros Bates and Minister Tim Nicholls

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E&OE

PREMIER:

Hello everybody. I promised Queenslanders a fresh start, and this is the team to deliver it. The team behind me have been disciplined and have been unified for the previous term, and it will be the team that takes forward the opportunities that Queenslanders need. We spoke a lot about the big four crises ahead of the election, and that will be front and centre on all we do. Youth crime, health, housing, cost of living remains our focus, and Queenslanders have entrusted us to put forward a team to deliver the solutions that are facing Queenslanders at the moment.

I might just make a couple of observations about the team and about some of the ministries, and then I'll hand over to you for questions, but for the for our term in opposition, you saw 20 faces, and they will be the 20 faces that lead the Government in this term of office. I want to thank everyone for their contribution in the way that we progress the change that Queenslanders need, but the hard work begins now.

The election gave us the opportunity to be in Government, but ultimately now Queenslanders will judge us on what we do for them and some of the changes, having spent the last week focused on those machinery of government changes, in my mind, set us up to be able to deliver for Queenslanders. So let me unpack some of the things. For the first time in Queensland, there will be a Minister for Customer Service. This is something that I've spoken a lot about, and I want Queenslanders to know, wherever they live, they matter, and they should have access to a Government that works for them. They should be proud of their Government and proud of interactions with them, and to have a Minister for Customer Service in this State will drive that change in putting people front and centre in all we do.

It was my intention to keep the tourism portfolio. Having spent the last week, it's apparent to me that the biggest blockages for tourism remains within the Department of Environment, so I've made the decision to create a super portfolio involving Tourism and Environment, and I'm asking Andrew Powell to be able to drive the change that is needed. Tourism is important, and as a result, there will be a cabinet sub-committee. But ultimately, we have to get eco-tourism going in this State again.

We will have a Minister for Open Data, and that will be attached with Steve, as Minister for Customer Service, that's important. I also promised a Minister for Integrity, and Deb Frecklington will do that, along with her role as Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. It is important that we set a standard that Queenslanders are proud of and we will work every day to make sure that we, having earned their trust, that we keep it.

Some of the changes before you, I have asked Christian Rowan to serve as Leader of the House. I am determined to make sure that the Parliament works and works properly, and that in the absence of an upper house, that those committee systems finally do their job. And I've spoken about reforming Estimates, I also want the committee process to work all of the time, and I'm also going to be sitting down with Christian and the Clerk of the Parliament to work out ways that we can have a greater opportunity for debate in the hours that we have. And I'll have more to say about than that in a moment. One thing is for certain, Doctor Rowan has the intellectual capacity and the respect across the political divide to change the culture in the House, and in his role as Leader of the House, he will drive that change.

Ros Bates has done a mighty job across two terms as shadow health minister. Following the election, Ros asked me and said that she would serve in any capacity, but she said that she would like an opportunity to have a different role, particularly with a finance focus. Ros has been promoted to one of the most senior roles in this Government, and her focus on finance and trade will show the world that Queensland is open for business again, and that we have a period of taxation and regulation certainty that has been missing for a long, long time.

The role previously held by Deb Frecklington has been split into a few different roles, including energy. I've made the decision to attach Energy with the Treasury portfolio, and I hope that shows Queenslanders we're fair dinkum about lowering their cost of electricity. It's that important and to use the levers of Treasury, having spent the last week looking at those machinery of government changes, I think having Energy with Treasury sends a signal to every Queenslanders that we know how much they're hurting, and we're determined to deliver those generational energy projects on time and on budget. Dale Last will take over the manufacturing component, and I've asked Water... I've asked Anne Leahy to attach Water with her Local Government and many other portfolios that she has as well.

I think that's probably about all of those different things. And I'll hand over to you for some questions before...

REPORTER:

Premier, you're [inaudible] about the Truth Telling and the Healing inquiry will be shut down respectfully, in a decent way, do you feel this has happened, have you spoken to Josh Creamer at all?

PREMIER:

I'll be having more to say about that in the weeks to come.

REPORTER:

[inaudible].

PREMIER:

We are keen to get back in there, but I'm happy to have a chat to you, mate. I'm happy to have a chat to you but we'll just keep going.

REPORTER:

Premier, when you say [inaudible] around tourism and health, do you think Queenslanders mark them as two broken promises?

REPORTER:

I don't believe so, Hayden. I said to you that I wanted stability, and you've got that. The 20 faces that were serving before will be serving after, and they've got a unified and focused desire to make sure that we deliver better for Queenslanders. You're right, there's been some machinery of government changes, and I want to make sure that Queenslanders know why they have occurred, and I've been up front about that. I love the tourism industry, and it's really important. The single biggest challenge for tourism at the moment remains getting product to market, and I just don't think that that could happen, having spent the last five days looking at some of the reasons why those decisions have been blocked. I just don't think, that even with the gravitas of attaching tourism to the Office of the Premier, I just don't think that it would be able to break up that inertia that is in the Environment Department.

REPORTER:

How did you not realise that when you were in opposition?

PREMIER:

I didn't have access to the information I do now, and I'm being upfront with Queenslanders. Tourism is important to me, and I want to see product development, and I want Queenslanders to know that the person who will be charged with that responsibility, and the person who will be held accountable for it, is someone who has a track record of delivery as a minister, who worked really well with that Environment Department, and attaching tourism with that, in my mind, gives us the opportunity to finally deliver new product. Have a look in the last decade and compare what Queensland has delivered compared to other states. And we've got the best natural assets, but we just haven't been able to get those products to market. And I am deeply passionate about the tourism industry, and I do believe that this is the way forward, having spent the last week reflecting.

REPORTER:

Premier, what is your what is your message to these First Nations Queenslanders who feel disenfranchised by this situation of having the Truth Telling inquiry scrapped?

PREMEIR:

That we will do better for them than what they've had. We'll give them the opportunity to own their home one day. We're going to improve education for their kids, you know, improve safety in their community, and health outcomes. And this is the team that will do it and will be held accountable. And I want people to know that we are serious about giving good outcomes for Indigenous communities and Indigenous Queenslanders. And we're going to work really hard to do that.

REPORTER:

Premier, were you invited to attend community sessions at Stradbroke Island this weekend?

PREMIER:

I don't think so.

REPORTER:

We've been told you were invited and you failed to respond.

PREMIER:

Lydia, I haven't seen the invitation. I genuinely haven't seen that.

REPORTER:

It's pretty unprecedented for a new Premier to close an independent inquiry, are you doing this for political reasons?

PREMIER:

I don't think that would be fair to say that, we campaigned and said that we wouldn't be progressing with that, but I didn't use inflammatory language. I didn't seek to divide. We explained our reason behind it, and I will be having more to say in the weeks to come about some of the things that we'll be doing for Indigenous Queenslanders.

REPORTER:

Have you spoken to Josh Creamer?

PREMIER:

No, I haven't. No, I haven't spoken to Mr Creamer.

REPORTER:

Mr Crisafulli, you said yesterday that you would do it with respect [inaudible]. Clearly Mr Creamer does not feel that way.

PREMIER:

Sure. I understand that he has a different view, Madura, I understand that, but I urge you to look at the language that I have used and I think you'll find that I have been very respectful in

the language that I've used. We put our position across. I was up front. I came and spoke to you all, and I've never sought to use inflammatory language at all.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]. It wasn't flagged in your 100 Day Review, though... not to talk to him though, is that divisive, to leave him out of the picture, ignore him?

PREMIER:

Well, I wouldn't say, I wouldn't say that that's been divisive, Marlena. I've been... I'm very happy to explain a way forward for Indigenous Australians, and I am determined to make sure that we do better. And I understand that some people will be disappointed that we are stopping that process. Others will find it refreshing that the people behind me will be held accountable for doing good for First Nations Australians. And I can... I'll make this observation; I've been in every one of those communities, and I would suggest to you that there's not a lot of Queenslanders who could say that, and I've seen the disadvantage and it hurts, and I'm determined to do something about it. And I've spoken a lot to Alf Lacey, who's the Mayor of Palm and he wants to be first cab off the rank in his community for someone there to own a home. And tell you what that would be so much more significant in my mind, to see a young person growing up in Palm having the aspiration of owning a home, then for us to go down a path of division that we saw federally 12 months ago, and we're not doing that.

REPORTER:

On home ownership, can you just explain the difference in responsibility between the Housing Minister and the Minister for Home Ownership?

PREMIER:

Yep, the Minister for Home Ownership will use the levers of Treasury to increase the percentage of people who are buying a home, particularly people buying their first home. So attached within Treasury and the Minister for Home Ownership will be the State Equity Scheme, and David Janetzki will be having a look at that and making sure that we can hit the ground running on that, that's important. Housing will be responsible for social and community housing. And the community housing sector in Queensland is a sleeping giant, and we want to get them mobilised and delivering for those who are unfortunate... who are less fortunate in this State. And we want to make sure that we deliver social housing on time and on budget, and Sam will be responsible for those two things.

REPORTER:

What will be the KPI for Indigenous home ownership?

PREMIER:

To get people owning them. To finally have...

REPORTER:



Is there a number?

PREMIER:

Well, the Palm Island Council has put forward a number which to me, which we will work together with, and we'll make that public. Alf's CEO, Michael Bissell, has given me a number that he believes is achievable in the first term. We'll sit down with them and work out what that looks like, and then release that publicly, and then hold the minister accountable once it happens.

REPORTER:

Premier the previous government appointed a mental health minister after significant campaigning on the issue, you don't have a mental health minister, has that been [inaudible] into Health?

PREMIER:

It is in the Health portfolio, and it will be in the assistant ministry portfolio as well.

REPORTER:

Premier, why should people believe you on your promises when you've already walked back to one on the Cabinet that wouldn't change?

PREMIER:

Well, it's the same face as we're standing behind me.

REPORTER:

Dr Christian Rowan isn't here.

PREMIER:

Well, he's the Leader of the House, and a parliament that we want to drive significant reform. And for the better part of the last 12 months, I've been told by....

REPORTER:

You said no changes though?

PREMIER:

Well, it's the same 20 people, and it's the same 20 people who have been unified and disciplined and focused, and it's the same 20 people who are going to fix a decade of mess. And that looks a lot like stability. And like any team, there are times that you need to do a different job. And what I'm asking of Dr Rowan is to turn a dysfunctional Parliament into one that Queenslanders can be proud of having.

REPORTER:

Do you regret breaking that promise Premier?



PREMIER:

I've stood by it.

REPORTER:

It's different face, isn't it? Christian Rowan is not here.

PREMIER:

Christian Rowan will be the Leader of the House, and it's the same 20 senior people sitting around that Cabinet table, every one of them. So, I just have to unpack that. I promised you it would be the same people leading this team, and the same 20 people will be sitting around the Cabinet table, the same 20 people who have been unified, disciplined and focused, will be sitting around that cabinet table. The same 20 people will be set targets to fix the mess and to make Queenslanders believe in government again. It's the same 20 people only with a different agenda, and that is instead of pointing out the problems giving Queenslanders hope to fix them.

REPORTER:

You said those Ministers, though, would have done the homework. That's why you wanted to keep them in their positions.

PREMIER:

They have. There been 20 people who have worked as a team, and I've always said to you, and I've always made it about the team. It's a very rare occasion that I've ever done a press conference on my own. I've always wanted the shadow ministers to be part of a team, and I got a point again, many of you were talking about different names. I said to you, it would be the same leadership team driving the cabinet agenda, and every single face is there. Now on the other changes. I've given you the reasons why that's the case. In the case of Ros, Ros said to me she'd serve in any capacity, but she did want a new challenge. And boy, oh boy, have we given her a challenge. It's, you know, to have...

REPORTER:

[Inaudible] the health system?

PREMIER:

Well, it's more senior.

REPORTER:

Really? You campaigned on health for four years. It is arguably the most important portfolio to Queensland.

PREMIER:

Well with just respect, we just swore it in a Cabinet, and I've given you the order, and she's going to be the Minister for Finance and Trade, and she's the fourth most senior person in the government. And I think you...

REPORTER:

Which portfolio did you give [inaudible]?

PREMIER:

I think fixing Labor's mess and having a unified team is more important.

REPORTER:

Premier, do you have the assistant ministry lined up?

PREMIER:

Thanks for the question, James. I just thought with seats still not declared, I think was appropriate that we waited to see where that finishes. Next week, it's my intention to announce to Queenslanders the Speaker of the Parliament, some of those roles within the Parliament, including committee chairs, as well as the assistant ministry. And that will give you an indication of Generation Next for Queensland.

REPORTER:

Along with the Minister for Mental Health, you also don't have a Minister the Great Barrier Reef or for Climate Change. Does that suggest those things are not priority?

PREMIER:

No. It suggests that the Minister of Environment should be looking after those two things.

REPORTER:

Premier, when Ms Bates said she wanted a new challenge, did you convince her to stay?

PREMIER:

I spoke to Ros after the election. She asked me, but to be clear, Ros said she'd serve in any capacity. She's a team player. But I think we've got the balance right. And I think having the most senior woman, in the team in a key finance role, is important too. And the I've made a promise before the election, that there'd be a three-person team looking at the state's finances. Two of them would be women. So, Fiona Simpson will be in charge of Women's Economic Security. Ros Bates will be in charge of finance, and David Janetzki is Treasurer, so that's an important part of it. I've given Ros a role to make sure that people can look at Queensland and want to invest again and I'm confident that she'll do that.

REPORTER:

Who will be the Speaker?



PREMIER:

Well, you're going to join me next week.

REPORTER:

Can we know now?

PREMIER:

We have a couple of next things I want to look at, because it is a good question. I also want to announce some of the other parliamentary roles, the Whips, etc, etc. So, we'll just wait for seats to be declared.

REPORTER:

Is there no minister for communities?

PREMIER:

Amanda Camm will look after Families, Seniors and Disability Services, as well as some of those important community roles. And I think it's fair to say that she'll have a laser like focus on making sure that those who are vulnerable and marginalised those communities will be able to have a voice.

REPORTER:

And have you given the Ministers the charter letters yet with the KPI?

PREMIER:

No, that'll be done within the next week, as per the 100-day plan.

REPORTER:

A third of the Ministers are women, is that reflective of a more diverse Cabinet?

PREMIER:

Well, I promised Queenslanders that we would put forward the most representative group of candidates, and they back them and back them overwhelmingly. And next week, I will be announcing the assistant ministry, and it will show you the depth of talent that we have. And that's good for everybody. It means that everybody has a sense of duty and knowledge that we genuinely that deep. And you'll see, you'll see you'll see the breadth of that talent when I make that announcement next week.

REPORTER:

Will there be KPIs in Making Queensland Safer Laws?

PREMIER:



So again, there's a number of people in key roles who will be set to target a fewer victims. And in the charter letters, there will be four ministers responsible for fewer victim numbers.

REPORTER:

[Inaudible]

PREMIER:

You'll see next week.

REPORTER:

What about directly....

PREMIER:

I should have said that the announcement of Directors-General will be made later on this afternoon. Mr Mackie will be heading back now to 1 William, to work through that process. There will be a mixture of existing Directors-General and new faces coming in, and I think that's exciting and refreshing. It'll give some stability. It'll also bring forward some of the best and brightest talent from throughout the country.

REPORTER:

How many of the existing Director-Generals that worked as Labor staffers previously?

PREMIER:

Not sure.

REPORTER:

Premier, what will be on the agenda for your first Cabinet meeting?

PREMIER:

It's a full one. And so, to just by way of process, after we're finished here today, we'll be heading back, and everybody will be given their incoming brief, which is important. Wherever possible, they will be connecting with the Director-General and then the hard work begins. We're going to work into the night tonight and spend the weekend just going through, getting ministers familiar with their department, and the first Cabinet meeting will be on Monday, which is pretty exciting.

REPORTER:

Will you be in charge of Olympic Infrastructure?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Yes.

REPORTER:

Have you had a chance to look at [inaudible] report and are you still committed to release that and the timeline?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Look, I've just been sworn in, which is massive honour, and I look forward to getting back to the office, or getting to the office I haven't been there yet, and getting that incoming brief, which will certainly cover all of those issues.

REPORTER:

As a lawyer, are you confident that you will be able to release all of the inquiry?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, again, I say I really need to be briefed. I've only just been appointed the Attorney General of Queensland, which I say, is a massive honour, but also with that, it takes a massive responsibility, and in the fullness of time, when I have a chance to be briefed by the department, I will be able to talk more about that.

REPORTER:

When will Kirsty Wright's report in the DNA review will be released?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, look again, I will be looking forward to being briefed by the department. But as you've heard from the Premier, when he was opposition leader, he made those announcements around Dr Kirsty Wright, and I very much look forward to as part of the briefing, going through that and meeting with her and discussing those as well, that issue as well, because it is a very important one, and it does highlight a major failing of the previous Labor government that needs fixing. And I'm very much, as you would know from a previous parliament, very passionate about that issue and something I'm taking extremely seriously.

REPORTER:

Who is your Director-General?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, Madura, I have just been sworn in. I haven't been to 1 William Street. I look forward to getting a briefing from the Department. And like Premier just said, in the fullness of time, all of those announcements will happen.

REPORTER:

Do you know what floor you are on?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Madura, I've literally, I think what's really important, though, and for me in particular, and all of my colleagues, what is really important is Queenslanders. We have been elected to keep

this community safe and like I said, there is a lot of work to do. So, I think, rather than worrying about, I actually don't care if I get a briefing in my Parliament Office, that's on...Level 13, I think, in my parliament when I was opposition. So, I'm happy to be briefed wherever. But first and foremost, in my mind is the people of Queensland and keeping them safe.

REPORTER:

Attorney would you be interested...obviously, there's a new legislation that has to go through parliament, are you interested in reviewing other cases for young criminals and lodging appeals for their sentences [inaudible]?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, look, I'm not going to get ahead of myself. I need to get in and get briefed. There are so many other ministers that are dying to have questions behind me...

[laughter]

But it is, look, it's a very good question, but that can only be answered in the fullness of time of being briefed by the department, and like I say, you know, we need to put the interests of Queenslanders first. There are many people out there that are hurting. We promise to keep our community safer, and that's exactly what I look forward to doing.

REPORTER:

Ms Bates, can I ask you, in opposition you said you were advocating for your former colleagues in the health system, why have you abandoned them now?

MINISTER BATES:

I will always advocate for my colleagues. I've got family members who are still in the system working within Queensland Health, so that will continue to remain something that's very important to me. I will be part of a cabinet that will not be siloed, and we will be able to work through not only the financial aspects of Queensland Health, but also looking forward to a new challenge, a fresh start for me personally, as you well know, I've taken the fight up to the Palaszczuk and Miles Labor government for the last seven years, I've gone through three health ministers who made health even worse. So, it's a passionate area for me, but this is a fresh start for me.

REPORTER:

Why not want to stay on and implement the changes you have advocated [inaudible]?

MINISTER BATES:

Well, I was happy to continue in any role that David Crisafulli wanted me to do, but I asked for a fresh challenge. As you would know, I took on the portfolio of Child Safety and Domestic Violence and made that issue in Queensland. I did the same thing with Health and



the Ambulance Services. It's time for me to have a fresh start with a new economic bent so I'm really looking forward to it.

REPORTER:

I've been sent messages by people inside Queensland Health who say you told them you were going to stay on.

MINISTER BATES:

Well, I don't know who you're talking to, Tim, but I...

REPORTER:

People who feel they have been misled.

MINISTER BATES:

Well, I don't believe that they have. And David basically has announced his new team today. I will be part of that team. Certainly, I will be assisting Tim Nicholls, who will be the new Minister for Health and Ambulance Services with all my clinical experience, that doesn't change. As I said, it will be a government that is not siloed, that we are all working together, and I really look forward to this new experience for me. I won the Queensland Telstra Businesswoman of the Year because I was a businesswoman. I have led trade delegations previously, before I was in parliament to Taiwan, I led a trade delegation to Bio in Boston when I was the Minister for Science, so I'm really looking forward to that fresh start and giving stability and certainty in trade and finance in Queensland.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] did you ever tell anyone that you would stay on this health minister within Queensland Health?

MINISTER BATES:

I basically was the shadow minister up until I was no longer the shadow minister.

REPORTER:

So did you tell anyone you would be staying on as Health Minister?

MINISTER BATES:

David Crisafulli said that before the election, I had a discussion with him after the election and asked for a fresh start. So, I am really looking forward to that Tim, so...

REPORTER:

When did you decide you wanted to leave health?

MINISTER BATES:



I had the discussion after the election. So, as I said, I was happy to serve in any role, and I will be serving in a cabinet that is going to diagnose, treat and cure the health crisis that was caused by the Palaszczuk and Miles Labor government.

REPORTER:

So it wasn't until after the election that you wanted out?

MINISTER BATES:

Well, I wanted a fresh start and a new future.

REPORTER:

A Freudian slip there?

MINISTER BATES:

[laughs]

I wanted to have a fresh start and to be able to have a new challenge. I have held that government to account for the last seven years, and you and I know Tim that I have, and I will continue to do that in this role with the rest of my cabinet colleagues, to fix the problems that have been caused by the Palaszczuk Miles Labor Government.

REPORTER:

Was that just a couple of days ago? Can you put a timeframe [inaudible]

MINISTER BATES:

Just a couple of days after the election, yep.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] disappointment [inaudible]

MINISTER BATES:

I wanted to have a new challenge and obviously a fresh start. There's a lot of things that we need to do in Trade and Finance. I will be integral on the Economic Review Committee, so every bit of spending in Queensland, I will be on there with the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer, so I'm looking forward to that as well.


REPORTER:

Minister Nicholls...

[inaudible]

Do you feel like you've been handed a poisoned chalice?

MINISTER NICHOLLS:



I think I've been given the cup of opportunity, and that cup runs over. The opportunities in the health area are enormous. \$30 billion. 110,000 employees. Servicing Queenslanders the length and the breadth of the state, from the Cape to Currumbin from Brisbane to Bedourie. There's not a Queenslanders who won't interact with Queensland Health Services at some time in their life. And this is a great opportunity. I'm looking forward to it. I think it is a real challenge. It's a personal challenge for me, but I've got great friends around me and great supporters in the cabinet. I'm particularly pleased that Ros is on the Expenditure Review Committee, so when I go in and see her, she will know exactly what it is I'm talking about and exactly what the challenges are. And I'm very hopeful for a sympathetic ear, because I do know how Treasurers behave, and I know we need to balance it up. But look, it's about a fresh start for Queenslanders. It's about healing the health crisis. It is about diagnosing the problems. It's about treating those problems, and it's about curing those problems, whether it's the 45 per cent ambulance ramping and bringing that down, and I'm sure that'll be a KPI, and it's about whether it's delivering and re-opening new birthing services. And I'm sure that'll be a KPI. It'll be about the services that are delivered in the so-called satellite hospitals, and that'll be a KPI. So, I am looking forward to it. I think it is a great challenge. It is obviously the biggest spending portfolio in the government. It has the greatest number of employees in the government, and I think it is an area that is ripe for improvement. I want to send a message out to everyone in Queensland Health, whether you're a doctor treating someone in A&E, whether you're working the wards and helping people on their recovery track, whether you're an allied health specialist, whether you're a nurse, indeed, whether you're an ambulance officer. Because we all know I've had a trip in one of those in the last 12 months as well, that you do a fantastic job, that it is valued by the Crisafulli Government, and that I intend to get out and travel the state to meet you on the front line, to find out exactly what it is you confront every day, to give you the support you need so that we can have a patient centred service that actually delivers a health outcome that Queenslanders can be proud of and rely on.

REPORTER:

Minister how long do you think you need to reduce ambulance ramping in Queensland?

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Well, our commitment was to do it in the first four years of the term, and I stick with that commitment. That is the...that is the...that is the policy we took to the election. But I, you know, we've got other things we need to do. We need to release that real time data. We'll start work on that as soon as I get a briefing. I fear that our IT systems, which have been plagued by problems, will continue to be plagued by problems unless we get in and fix them. And so that will be something we'll need to get on top of so we can get that real time data out, so people can see just what is happening within the health system. So, there are a range of issues. As you all know, it's a huge portfolio, and I know the challenges of that portfolio, I've observed it as a Treasurer. I've observed it as a colleague of Ros as health minister, and as John Paul as a shadow health minister, and John Paul as shadow health minister. As I say, it is a cup of opportunity, and that cup runs over, and I'm looking forward to the challenge.



REPORTER:

Are you suggesting that the real time health data disclosure might not be required [inaudible]?

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

No, no, no, not suggesting that. I'm just saying I understand that there are issues in the IT system. Now I need to find out what they are, and make sure that you're kept informed, and Queenslanders are kept informed, and that's what we'll be about. So, if there are challenges, we need to let people know what those challenges are.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

Just breaking in for a second, the Governor is actually waiting for the ministers to get back in there, we might need to just [inaudible]

REPORTER:

Only the Treasurer, the Housing Minister, the Olympics Minister, the...

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Sorry, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah...

REPORTER:

They need Laura as well!

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah...everyone's a comedian in this business. Come on. Right oh, Madura...one more from Madura then we'll call it quits and then you can go to other people, how's that sound?

MINISTER GERBER:

[inaudible] Brendan [inaudible]

MINISTER NICHOLLS:


No, no sorry Laura you're later. Okay, just hang on, they're coming.

REPORTER:

How long after your briefing will you be able to tell us I guess the extent of the hospital infrastructure [inaudible] or otherwise [inaudible]?

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Sure. Look, I mean, I imagine those briefing books are going to be huge. It's going to take some time to go through those briefing books get the advice from the department, but as real,



as soon as realistically possible, I'll be, I'll be letting you know those issues. Madura. Okay. Why don't we wrap it up? So, we got to let the Governor go and do the right thing there. But you can grab others one by one. So, we'll go up and say goodbye, and then you can come back and grab people. We've got to go up and come back, all right?

[ENDS]

Released under RTI - DPC

Station: ABC Radio Brisbane

Program: Mornings

Speaker: Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie

Airdate: Tuesday 12 November 2024 8.33am

Duration: 15 minutes

E&OE

STEVE AUSTIN:

Well, as you know, the Federal Government has called on the State Government to get on with building the Olympic venues for the 2032 event. Yesterday, Catherine King, Infrastructure Minister, warned the LNP's pre-election commitment to do 100-day review note could see further cost blow-out blow-outs. This morning, Labor Senator Murray Watt, also a Queensland Federal Senator, called on Jarrod Bleijie to get on with the job. So, let's go to the man who seems to be doing most of the heavy lifting at the moment. Jarrod Bleijie is the Deputy Premier of Queensland. Jarrod Bleijie, good morning to you.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Good morning, Steve and good morning to your listeners.

STEVE AUSTIN:

As you've heard, Catherine King, federal counterpart, has said get on with it to avoid more cost blow-outs. Your response?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, the new LNP government is getting on with the job. I think what we've been exposing, I think that's at the heart of it, the Labor Party just doesn't like we're exposing Labor Party blow-outs, and it's okay for Murray Watt to say the new government should get on with the job. Well, we'll keep releasing what the Labor blow-outs are. Is Murray Watt suggesting he's going to fund all these Labor blow-outs? Because we want to respect people's money. That's why we're going to do the 100-day review through the Independent Coordination Authority.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Let me play you what Senator Watt said.

SENATOR WATT:

[EXCERPT]

Obviously, every time you do a review, there's more delay, there's cost increases. And that's what Jarrod Bleijie says that he's concerned about.

[EXCERPT ENDS]

STEVE AUSTIN:

So, are you concerned about cost blow-outs or are you concerned about shifting blame home to the previous administration?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, we're absolutely concerned about cost Blow-outs, Steve, because just three minor venue programs within two days, I asked the department, can you just give me the updated figures? And they were \$181 million blown out, and the previous government knew about it, but they didn't disclose it. The contingency funding allowed for blow-outs on these projects is only \$106 million. It's already spent, Steve, just with the three projects. So there's Chandler Sport Centre, the Sunshine Coast Indoor Centre and the Sunshine Coast Outdoor Centre. Just those three programs are \$181 million already blown out before a contract is even awarded, so I won't cop it from Labor Senator Murray Watt saying get on with the job unless he's saying that the Federal Government are going to fund all the state Labor comrades blow-outs then we will respect money, and we must ensure these projects can be delivered on time and on budget, because at the moment it's all blown out and the former government knew about it and they refused to release the details before the election.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Yesterday I spoke with Grace Grace, cabinet minister in the previous Labor state government. She claims she didn't know about it and called on your government to stop looking back or looking back to the past but get on with being a government.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, interestingly, because that was the same line Steven Miles ran last week. But I don't know if you saw yesterday, Steve, Cameron Dick, the Deputy Opposition Leader, and Bart Mellish, the Shadow Transport Minister, come out and release blow-outs that they knew from the Labor Government. So are they picking and choosing what blow-outs they knew about because they proactively released blow-outs, Labor blow-outs yesterday from opposition that they didn't release before the election. So, I'm sorry Grace Grace, you can't have it both ways. You either know the blow-outs there or you don't know. You can't say, oh, we only knew about some, but not the others. The reality is, Steve, she was the minister. She absolutely knew what the blow-outs were. And they kept it secret because they knew it would not be good for their election chances of success, and I was able to get the figures in 48 hours. And we said to Queenslanders, we'll respect your money. And we're releasing these figures so people know the full picture of what the problem ahead of us we actually have.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Grace Grace specifically was referring to the Roma Street development in particular, saying that the report done on what was needed there hadn't been completed, before the caretaker period.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, that's interesting because in my response to Catherine King, the federal infrastructure minister, in my letter back to her a couple of days ago, I highlighted in the letter the Brisbane Arena joint business case submission, initial cost estimate currently exceeds the approved funding envelope of \$2.5 billion. The business case hasn't been finished, but the department were able to tell me that it is already likely to be over the budget. And then the that's on top of the \$2.5 billion for the Arena. The Roma Station needs upgrading to connect it to the Arena. And that could be upwards of \$500 million on top of the \$2.5 billion. So, Steve, it is really concerning. And we're talking here possibly of blow-outs of not hundreds of millions. It could end up billions. So, we do need to look at this carefully and respectfully. And I'm sorry to the Labor Party, they had 1200 days, three years, since Queensland was awarded the games for 2032. They didn't do anything for three years other than put a bunch of tenders out that have all blown out and cost estimates have escalated. So, all we're asking for is 100 days for an independent coordination authority to fix the mess of the last three years created by Steven Miles, Grace Grace and Cameron Dick.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Jarrold Bleijie is the Deputy Premier of Queensland. You've scrapped the idea of upgrading the Queensland Sports and Athletic Centre at Nathan. You've ruled out new stadiums. Doesn't that only leave your government with a Gabba rebuild?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

No, not necessarily Steve, because the terms of reference, which I'm drafting at the moment, will be sufficiently broad enough to allow the Independent Coordination Authority to do its job. Look at the current venues, upgrading current venues. We've certainly ruled out QSAC because the only person that supported QSAC we can find in the world was Steven Miles, which we don't support because I think you're spending billions of dollars on upgrading a temporary stadium out there is just not a good use of taxpayer's money. So, we have ruled that out. We have said this Olympic and Paralympic Review must be about generational road and rail infrastructure connecting of cities. Because the \$7.1 billion allocated to infrastructure for the Olympic and Paralympic Games does not include road and rail projects, it's all venues and the venues which I've just listed. The three venues already \$181 million over budget, so we want the review to focus on generational infrastructure, road, rail, the type of things that Queenslanders were promised. When we got when we were awarded the games.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Were the South East Queensland Council of Mayors misled? They supported the Olympic proposal on the promise, originally supported by John Coates, the Head of the Australian Olympic Committee, by the way, to have fast rail in South East Queensland. And that was the basis on which the South East Queensland mayors actually agreed to support the Olympics. That's now disappeared. Can you say if they were misled?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, I think everybody was misled by the former Labor state government. And I think people will see the last three years since we've got the games and you ask yourself the

question, what had actually been achieved in three years? Regional and rural Queensland did not benefit anything in the last three years. We're trying to turn that around to get regional and rural Queensland back onside and excited for the Games 2032. That's why we announced \$250 million Games On package, which is about making sure young kids in the bush have a chance to learn sport and compete in 2032 grassroots community sport upgrades across the state, not just in Brisbane. And you're right, generational transformational infrastructure like rail to the Sunshine Coast, projects like that were part of the original bid and it completely got left off the agenda in the last three years. And that's why the Coordination Authority with the 100-day review must look at how we deliver those projects by 2032.

STEVE AUSTIN:

A couple more questions on this. Then I want to go to the accounting process overall. But in relation to the Olympics, it's quite clear that some unions, particularly perhaps the CFMEU are going to make life difficult for your new government and they are apparently a key union who's involved in construction around infrastructure projects. It's already forced up the price of infrastructure projects. In fact, it's designed, it would like, look like from the previous government to force up the price. How are you planning to deal with that? Doesn't that mean that your window of opportunity is rapidly disappearing to get stuff done in time, because you're going to be met with blocks, opposition and obstruction from left wing unions, who you appear to have been angering even more so.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well as so far as the CFMEU are concerned, I don't think it's just us, Steve. I think it's the Queensland public look at disdain of the CFMEU including, I might add, the Federal Labor Government who put the CFMEU into administration at federal level. So I don't think it's just the Liberal National Party Government in Queensland. I think everyone looks at the CFMEU and productivity on worksites hasn't been there. We've got construction sites in Queensland which are CFMEU dominated at the moment, with people working less than three days a week. So it has led to cost escalations...

STEVE AUSTIN:

And that makes the Olympics build look harder. That's why people are so concerned about the time window.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

I think, the productivity from the CFMEU on construction sites has blown out the budget on many of these Olympic and Paralympic venues.

STEVE AUSTIN:

All right. My guest is Jarrod Bleijie, Deputy Premier of Queensland. There is a significant body of opinion in Queensland that says we don't want the Olympics hand it back. Let someone else do it like Melbourne did or Victoria did with the Commonwealth Games. Is the state government of a mind to even consider that?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

No we're not. Steve, we believe that the 2032 Games will be great for Queensland. We understand there are many Queenslanders who feel a bit of frustration with the lack of progress of the former government. We get that, we understand it. We do want to turn public sentiment around, and part of that is making sure we do the 100-day review, which we were elected on the basis everyone knew our position on that. But also, we've got to bring regional and rural Queensland in on the process. We tried to move an amendment in parliament when the former government set up the independent panel at the last minute to have a rural and regional Queensland represented on the board, and they rejected that in parliament. And that just shows why regional and rural Queensland particularly and there were political parties, I might add, going to the election to cancel the games. We believe it will have great benefits to the state. We just have to show that to people of how it can benefit everyone in Queensland. But that won't happen unless we build roads and rail of the future and get that infrastructure. And it's not all about stadia, Steve. It's got to be about generational infrastructure programs like road and rail, which we were promised, and it hadn't been delivered by the former government.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Jarrold Bleijie is the Deputy Premier of Queensland. Deputy Premier you're going through an accounting process as a new government. You're trying to find out what money you've got, where, the situation is at. How long will this accounting process go on for before you have what your government regards as an adequate handle on the finances of Queensland?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, I think at this stage it would be fair to say, Steve, that all our ministers are going through the process of finding, you know, and getting information from their departments with respect to the overruns and over costs on certain projects that the former government didn't tell people about. That's our priority at the moment. That's my priority in the infrastructure portfolio and Olympic and Paralympic infrastructure. And as I've promised, Queenslanders and I've promised the media, when I find out the costs, I'm going to release them publicly, something the former government didn't do. And that's transparent. It's being open. I can't tell you how long that process will go because there are currently, business cases ongoing. There are project validation reports ongoing, but it does appear in terms of the Olympic and Paralympic Games that the government...the figures they put on some of these venues was not right at the outset.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Do you believe that the Olympic cost blow-outs are the worst, or the biggest or the most significant funding headaches your new administration has at the moment?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

It's one of many, Steve. There's the Olympic and Paralympic Labor blow-outs. But I think in Transport and Main Roads, you're going to see a lot of the projects that have the former government knew about, blow-outs clearly yesterday, the opposition stood up and released Blow-outs from opposition, which I've got to say, Steve, I've never seen before an opposition

releasing their blow-outs from opposition, not from government. When they had the figures, they just proves they deliberately hid them from people before the election. So that was an interesting one I saw yesterday. But no, we'll just keep releasing them when we get them to hand. Steve. We want people to know the new government is being transparent with these figures. And we're going through that process now.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Will your government honour the previous Labor Government's half \$1 billion for the PsiQuantum computer project?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

The Treasurer is seeking briefings on that at the moment, Steve. My understanding is those briefings haven't been all the information hasn't been provided yet. So he is going through that process at the moment of seeking briefings. We did at budget estimates this year, prosecute that issue in terms of the direct funding. And I think we have to let the Treasurer get those briefings before we make a decision.

STEVE AUSTIN:

All right. Finally, I know you're busy. So do you know whether the preview or where the previous state government spent all those rivers of gold coming from the increased coal royalties, they got an unexpected windfall because of the high coal price globally. It meant a whole lot of extra money came into Queensland Treasury. Can you tell yet where all those billions went?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, probably on glossy brochures and government advertising during election campaigns. Steve, that appears where a lot of it's gone.

STEVE AUSTIN:

It's a serious question. Do you know?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Steve, I can't tell you because I can't say it's on infrastructure because it's certainly not the case. There was a pipeline of work for hospitals and road delivery, where they had said, that's how it's going to be funded, but we're going through the motions now of working that out.

STEVE AUSTIN:

All right. I appreciate so much of your time this morning. Thanks very much, Jarrod Bleijie.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Good on you, Steve. Thank you. Have a good day.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Jarrod Bleijie is the Deputy Premier of Queensland.



[ENDS]

Released under RTI - DPC

Station: 4BC Brisbane
Program: Breakfast
Compere: Peter Fegan
Interviewee: Transport and Main Roads Minister Brent Mickelberg
Date: 21 November 2024
Duration: 8 minutes 30 seconds

E&OE

PETER FEGAN:

Finally, we have a leader in this State that is listening to us and not acting on their own self-interest. I was very critical of David Crisafulli during the election campaign. I didn't think he was prepared, but I was wrong. It turns out that the new Premier of Queensland was simply keeping his cards close to his chest. And I can exclusively reveal this morning the Crisafulli government will re-establish the Bruce Highway Advisory Council by the end of 2024, as part of its commitment to providing a long-term plan for the Bruce. Well done, Premier David Crisafulli. And I know what you're thinking, the council will be made up of bureaucrats. Wrong. The government wants to speak to you. Expressions of interest are now open to Queenslanders who regularly use the Bruce Highway between Carseldine and Cairns, and can identify priority locations for future investment to improve road safety. So there will be no top bureaucrats. This is on us. And joining me on the line now to discuss is the new Transport Minister here in Queensland, Brent Mickelberg. Minister, a very good morning to you.

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Good morning, Peter.

PETER FEGAN:

This I have to say a very big congratulations to you and the government. Finally.

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Yeah. Thank you Peter. We made a commitment to have this up and running by Christmas. And this will be a promise made and a promise kept. We're very focused on ensuring that we deliver on the promises we took to the people of Queensland in the election. And we think this is an important way that the government, can be better informed in relation to the Bruce Highway. It's obviously the spine of Queensland. We know a lot more work needs to be done, but we need to prioritise that work based on the feedback from Queenslanders.

PETER FEGAN:

Now Minister, primarily you'll be in charge. But what I like about this proposal is that it's the people that will be driving it. It's the you and I of Queensland, the people that use the Bruce Highway that will be in control of the changes that need to be made. So how is it going to work?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Well, absolutely. It's going to be the Queenslanders who are in charge. And what we want to see is people from a broad cross-section of our communities right up and down the coast. So we want to see truckies on the advisory council. We want to see someone who might drive down to see their kids on the weekend from Mackay down to Rocky. They're the kind of people we want to ensure have their voice heard on this Bruce Highway Advisory Council. We want to make sure that we are listening to Queenslanders right up and down the coast. We know that the Bruce obviously needs a considerable amount of work, but we're going to need to prioritise those areas that are going to have the greatest bang for our buck. And we think this is an important way to be able to inform that investment, based on those who use the road the most.

PETER FEGAN:

Now, Minister, while I'm extremely happy that this is going ahead, you can understand why Queenslanders will be a little bit cynical this morning. This isn't the first time a new government or a new transport minister, or a politician by that matter, has stood up and said, we're going to fix the Bruce Highway. What guarantee are you giving me this morning?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Well, what we need to do is... I'm going to make two promises to you. One, we'll listen to this Bruce Highway Advisory Council, we think that's really important. Two, I'm going down to Sydney tonight and I'll be meeting with the road safety ministers across the country tomorrow, and I'll be pushing for 80-20 funding from the Federal Government that was previously the case. The Albanese government then cut that funding and made it 50- 50, and it makes it a whole lot harder for us to deliver the upgrades we need. There's been a lot of money committed to the Bruce over the years, but in many cases not a whole lot of work. And there have been some safety improvements in and around the Bruce. But I drove back from Rocky... we had Cabinet in Rocky on Monday, and I drove back on Monday night. And I can tell you the road south of Rocky down to Gladstone and then again from down towards Miriam Vale and Gin Gin. It needs a lot of work, it needs some upgrades, there's some safety issues, there's pavement issues. We need to get those work started sooner rather than later. I'll be pushing really hard to ensure we get our fair share here in Queensland, but more importantly that we get work started on the Bruce.

PETER FEGAN:

Minister, it's a shame you're flying to Sydney tonight, and I'm not trying to criticise you for doing so, because it'd be great for you if you could have driven on the M1 all the way to Sydney and understood - well, you probably do already know - how beautiful that piece of road is. It's interesting that most of it's in New South Wales' backyard. And then you head north of the Sunshine Coast and how terrible... well, north of Caboolture, how terrible the

Bruce Highway is. The point I'm trying to make is the M1 is a gorgeous piece of road and it's safe and people are starting to use it. We need the Bruce Highway to be exactly what the M1 is now. That was funded 80-20 by the Federal Government. So it is super important that you get this deal over the line.

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

You're 100 per cent on the money, Peter. I couldn't agree more. And you drive down the Bruce... drive down the M1, down through Coffs, up probably the only ordinary stretches that stretch through Coffs Harbour but that...

PETER FEGAN:

Which has being bypassed now, Minister. I mean, they're bypassing it.

MINISTER MICHELBERG:

Yeah, absolutely. And they've had that investment as you correctly identified, on an 80-20 funding split, right? So we need to make sure we get our fair share. That has been the long standing arrangement for many, years and we need to ensure that it's restored because, put simply, the quantum of work that's required on our National Highway, which the Bruce is, is simply too big of a task for any one government to achieve on their own. And we need to work collectively together. And that's why we need the Federal Government to come to the party. But I don't want to pass the buck here. Ultimately, my job as the Transport Minister is to ensure that we have the roads and the public transport infrastructure that Queenslanders need, the Bruce is a big part of that. We'll be going into bat to ensure we get that funding, but either way, we need to get work started on the Bruce as soon as possible.

PETER FEGAN:

It's 22 after seven. My guest this morning is the new Transport Minister here in Queensland, Brent Mickelberg. If you've missed the major announcement, the Minister is on this program this morning to let us all know that the David Crisafulli government will re-establish the Bruce Highway Advisory Council and it's you that will be driving it, not bureaucrats, which is fantastic and well done to the government. I'll ask you this, and if I can get a straight answer, I'd appreciate it. Minister, will you be putting forward plans to bypass towns such as Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Townsville and Cairns.

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Well, Rocky's already bypassed with the Rocky Ring Road, which works started on now, and that's a good thing. But it did take a considerable amount of advocacy from the Federal members up there and Matt Canavan and Michelle Landry. So, those projects are really important. If I use that as an example, I think it removes something like 24 sets of lights it goes through multiple school zones. So they're the kind of projects that we absolutely need to look at. But I'd also make the observation that we also need to ensure that we're upgrading the stretches in between those major towns. And I think, you know, we've seen in recent weeks tragic instances where there's been major fatal accidents, including on the weekend in those stretches of road. So we need to upgrade safety, but we also need to keep people moving. And there has been investment. I'll acknowledge there's been investment in areas like Mackay

on the Ring Road, and there is investment in the Rocky Ring Road. Those projects are really important. I think Bundy is probably a little bit less of an issue at the moment because the Bruce obviously, is a little bit further to the West. But, we need to do more to ensure that we get trucks separated out of those major centres and we keep people moving. And that's got to be a priority for every government.

PETER FEGAN:

Minister, before I let you go, we can't forget our stretch of the M1 that we're still responsible for. And that is from here to Coolangatta. It's terrible. I'm getting text messages from friends again this morning about breakdowns and how terrible it is up there and Smith Street down through Loganlea. So let's not forget that I won't put that to you this morning. I want to, if you can give me a guarantee. Now, your leader, the leader, David Crisafulli, did promise that the price of getting your learner's permit was going to come down from \$100. We can't have kids paying 100 bucks. It's too expensive. Minister, where are we at with changing the price?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Yeah. Look, you're on the money. We know how important it is for someone, for a young person to get their learner's licence. It's sort of the kick start to a job in many cases and it's currently \$75 for a learner's permit. My personal view is that's too high.

PETER FEGAN:

Well, it's \$30 fee as well, \$105. It needs to come down, back to \$30. Can we do it?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Correct. Look, it's we've got a review in it at the moment. It's something that I think we need to look at. It is a tangible measure that will help young people.

PETER FEGAN:

Minister, is it doable, yes or no? I think we can do it. Surely.

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

I think it's doable.

PETER FEGAN:

Okay. Good on you. That's what we needed. Well done, Minister, well done to you and the government. This is a great initiative. We're going to check back in with you in a month's time or so to see where it's at. And we appreciate your time this morning.

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Thanks a lot, Peter.

[ENDS]

Event: Press conference

Speaker/s: Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry Chair Joshua Creamer

Airdate: 22 November 2024, 1pm

Duration: 18mins

E&OE

MELISSA MACKAY:

We're taking you live now to Brisbane, where the Chairperson of Queensland's Truth-telling and Healing inquiry is speaking.

JOSHUA CREAMER:

... with the Premier the Minister or the Director-General. There's been very little communication, but for a proposed meeting that was indefinitely postponed. Now, I think we've all come to realise over the last 23 days that we are all governed by the rule of law. And if you want to dismantle a functioning and effective inquiry, you have to comply with the law. And as it stands, the *Path to Treaty Act* is the law, and under the *Path of Treaty Act*, myself and other members, we have certain responsibilities, our duties and functions. And given the inability of the government to be able to move swiftly, we've decided to recommence the work of the inquiry.

There will be some limitations to that. The plan going forward is obviously to open our submissions portal and that is open today. Our submissions portal will be opened at least until early January. At this stage, and at the end of that juncture, we're proposing to produce a report. It is obvious that the inquiry will not get the opportunity to run out its statutory term of three years, but nevertheless, it's likely to be now, several months before the government can actually do something about repealing that legislation.

I also have responsibilities under the *Path to Treaty Act* for the efficient and effective use of those resources that the inquiry has. Those resources include our staff, which are provided to support the inquiry by the department. Taking those things into consideration, I think it's important that we utilise our resources effectively over the next coming months and as I say, the staff will be focused on engaging with key organisations, institutions working through the submissions and then producing a report which under the Act has to be provided to the Minister and will be tabled in Parliament. Any questions?

REPORTER:

So what have your requests been to the government? What have you been trying to find out?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Look, I've sent six correspondents and some of those I think you've seen. The latest one was this morning, which is quite comprehensive and has specific details which are confidential in relation to the operations of the inquiry, but effectively requesting an urgent meeting to

understand what their plan is and what their processes are. My concerns have always been the communities in which we've worked with and the trauma informed approach, ensuring that we have are dealing with them effectively, and we've been taking steps over the last number of weeks to engage with Cherbourg and Stradbroke in particular in closing down that engagement. The staff are critical, what happens to them and just their plans, their timeline for closing up this inquiry. As I say, the *Path to Treaty Act* exists and we need to adhere to our functions.

REPORTER:

You say several months to repeal the *Path to Treaty Act*. Could they put a stop to the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry at any point, you know, in that timeframe??

JOSHUA CREAMER:

There's number of things which are relevant. So obviously the *Path to Treaty Act* is the primacy in that. The second part is that the members and myself as chair have our positions. And third, that we have access to the resources of the staff. And so long as those three things are in place, we are an independent inquiry and we have to make decisions for ourselves based on the information which is available to us.

REPORTER:

What have you been doing the last 23 days?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

We've been working on a closeout plan actually. We developed, we hadn't... obviously, we thought in 2027 we'd have to develop our closeout plan, but that has obviously been brought forward. And over the last couple of weeks, we've been working to ensure we comply with our principles around indigenous data sovereignty and consents. We've handed back information to our participants who provided us with evidence. We've been out to, obviously, Cherbourg closing out that process, and myself and a number of members and staff were on Stradbroke this week closing that process. Also working with the State Archivist to ensure that the information, the record of the inquiry and the evidence that's been given is protected. So those are some of the key priorities over the last couple of weeks

REPORTER:

There's a sitting week on the 9th of December, which is a full sitting week. What if they repeal the legislation that week?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

As I understand it, there's a number of steps to repeal the legislation. They could certainly repeal the legislation this week coming. We all know it's the first sitting week of Parliament, so they could do that. They might be able to introduce the bill in December. I don't know whether they'd be able to have that repeal bill come in force before Christmas. I certainly, we certainly can't sit around here for months and months and months and waiting for them to do something. As I say, we've got a responsibility as members under the Act, and I've got

responsibilities in terms of the effective, efficient use of resources. And I don't want the team sitting around doing nothing, waiting for the government for 3 or 4 months.

REPORTER:

So is there still funding available to you to, I guess, open this portal and to have those staff on?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Yeah, no, certainly we've got access to those resources. We've got the staff and we've got access to the resources which have been there. There's been no, as I say, no information from the government. So no discussions about pulling back our resources at any stage. So whilst there will continue to utilise them.

REPORTER:

Do you know how much it costs so far?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Yeah, we published our report in August which was around, just under \$2, around \$2.5 million. I don't have that exactly with me, but I know it was under \$3 million. So those were our costs to date, and we've spent very minimal cost since then. I will say we're not proposing to go into the big truth-telling sessions and hearings. They are very expensive processes. And utilising, you know, our budget responsibly it wouldn't be beneficial to use those resources or expend that type of money in the event that the inquiry has only got a few months to continue.

REPORTER:

The Deputy Premier says today that the Minister, Fiona Simpson, is seeking advice about the questions you've put to her and wants to be armed with that information before meeting, and he has confidence that meeting will take place. Has that been communicated to you? What has been the latest?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

I'm aware they were seeking advice, but there's not been any timeline around proposed meeting. As I say, it's 23 days now. We simply can't wait around for things to happen. We need to continue to meet our obligations under the *Path to Treaty Act*.

REPORTER:

Wouldn't she be able to answer those questions by meeting with you or meeting with participants of the truth-telling inquiry? And wouldn't you want to know those answers before you put a stop to it?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Look, I mean, they can take whatever action they choose. I saw the minister at the Women's Legal Service breakfast yesterday, and she ran away from me. So, you know, if they don't want to have a discussion, that's up to them.

REPORTER:

How would you describe relations with the government?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Frosty.

REPORTER:

She ran away from you?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Well, she certainly didn't, wasn't coming up for a chat. She saw me and went the other way.

REPORTER:

It's such a pretty important thing for the Premier to do first up, you know, announce it the day of swearing in his ministers. Why is it, why are they dragging their heels when it comes to making a decision?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Look, I can't speak to their approach other than to say it certainly was obviously the first decision they made. We were all aware of that when it came out at the press conference. We, I think there's been a level of lack of capability on their behalf, even to be able to have a meeting. So whilst we aren't provided with information and we've got to continue to undertake our work, we can in the timeframe do some really important work engaging with key institutions. Many of you would have seen a number of churches and other organisations have come out in support of the inquiry over the last few weeks. We want to engage with them and make sure that the records or the information that we receive goes onto the public record. And that, that is an important part of the process, that the material that the inquiry will receive over the next coming, coming weeks will form part of our official record and we'll be open to the public.

REPORTER:

Sum up your feelings in a few words right now in terms of the State Government?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Sorry, what was that?

REPORTER:

Can you sum up your feelings at the moment?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Their feelings?

REPORTER:

Yours.

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Sorry, I missed that.

REPORTER:

What your feelings are in relation to how they handled it?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, no. Look, I can only speak to what the community. And as I say, we've been out to Cherbourg, we've been out to Stradbroke Island, and there's a lot of hurt out in the community from the decision that's been made. You know, there's... people feel a responsibility and the importance of this process. And I won't just say that's restricted to the Aboriginal community. We've all seen many different organisations and institutions come out in support of the inquiry over the last couple of weeks, so we feel a responsibility to continue to do the best work we can in the timeframe we've got.

REPORTER:

There's been a petition made, has that more than 8000 signatures that I've seen from the general public. Should the government be listening to the voices in the community that don't want this inquiry to be shut down?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Look, all I can say there's been a wave of support, and it's up to the government whether they choose to listen to that. As you say, there's been a, there's been a lot of things circulating around. I know people are, you know, doing stuff next week as well with the first week of Parliament sitting. So there's a huge wave of support. And, you know, we've got to... it's really ultimately a responsibility for them, whether they listen to it or not.

REPORTER:

What's going to be in that report when you finish it in January next year?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, I haven't started yet.

[laughter]

REPORTER:

I mean, what are we... what sort of topics are you going to be? You don't have to tell me the outcomes yet, but what sort of stuff will you be producing?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Well, it's going to be based on the evidence we receive. That's largely what it will come down to. And look, we've already received a significant body of evidence from government departments. You would have seen with our government truth-telling session, there's a there's material that we can really sink our teeth into over the next couple of weeks, and we expect submissions from other organisations. We have been contacted since closing the portal. We

know there are organisations out there preparing submissions, opening it today, putting the word out there. We know that there will be material that comes before us, but until we review that material, we won't be able to, I can't tell you what it is we'll be determining.

REPORTER:

Do you think there'll be advice for government, though?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Well, our report, our recommendations will be advice. That's how the Act is set up, that our report is to provide advice to the Minister. And those recommendations will be on that basis later.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] the Mayor of Palm Island was mentioned by the new Premier in that statement, in that press conference. I was up there earlier in the week, and I can tell you, homeownership is certainly not the biggest problem facing the community there. And that's like many communities right across Queensland.

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Look, I did see the Mayor Lacey come out and say that truth-telling is important after the Premier's comments and should be continued.

REPORTER:

And just to clarify, you don't think this has ever happened before where, like, an independent inquiry has been closed down by a change of government?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Not for a political purpose, no. We haven't found any reason in Queensland where there has been a, an attempt or a wish or desire to close down an inquiry purely for a political reason.

REPORTER:

In terms of those hearings that were scheduled for Cobourg and for Stradbroke, since they've been cancelled, what has actually happened there? Has there still been an element of truth-telling happening out of those communities?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Yeah, I think Cherbourg is a good example. They've been they were well placed to talk about their history, given it's 20 years since they opened the ration shed, which is a really significant part of their history. They did undertake some work around truth-telling, I think, an event around truth-telling last week. And I know that the... you'll recall that the Premier said we weren't able to attend meetings on Stradbroke Island a couple of weeks ago. I know those meetings did attend and visiting with the community earlier this week, they've got this ongoing commitment to towards truth-telling.

REPORTER:

With the portal reopening, what additional stories are, I guess, you're hoping to hear? And do you think given you know, there is a, I guess shorter timeline now, what fear is it that, you know, what else is going to be lost? What are we not going to get to hear from people?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, we've lost a huge amount. Even just Cherbourg, for example, and I know they've taken steps, they've obviously taken steps towards truth-telling. But we'd prepared 40 witnesses that would spend at least two or three hours each telling their evidence. You know, that's a, I mean, it's a small example, but that's a big body of evidence in one community. And the depth and the detail of that type of history will be lost. And the, and really the opportunity for Queensland to understand its history, you know, will be lost by, you know, by shelving the inquiry.

REPORTER:

How many submissions have you received before it was closed?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

I don't know exactly, but we sent out over 400 notices for submissions and those notices are actually still active. We didn't recall any of those notices. And so we'll, now with the reopening of this portal, our team will engage with those various organisations to ensure that those who can meet the timeline of a submission will do so. But I know there will be probably a more broader approach as well, with engaging key institutions over the next couple of weeks to ensure that there's a lot of organisations who are aware of this process reopening.

REPORTER:

Do you expect government departments to be effusive in their response to give you information that you asked for?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Government, we are sending notices to different government departments and really, it's a matter for the Director-Generals. Under the *Public Service Act*, *Public Service Commission Act*, truth-telling is still a priority and that is the law. And Director-Generals have the responsibility to engage with the truth-telling process. So there's a legal requirement that they do, but ultimately it's a matter for them.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] the other day when you were at that breakfast. She's not answering emails. She's not taking phone calls from anybody really. Is, is Fiona Simson out of her depth in Aboriginal affairs?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, look, I'm not in a position to comment on that. Good question though, Dan.

REPORTER:

In terms of the stories you've heard so far, are there any standouts for you, any stories that just need to be told?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, look, the Queensland... the history of Queensland needs to be told. That's what it comes down to. I've had the benefit of working on historical matters for 15 years. I've got a better grasp than most about the history. It's a beautiful history. It's a powerful history and very few people understand it. That's the, that was the benefit of this inquiry. But we'll do the best we can in the short timeframe we've got to compile a report that covers, you know, key aspects of our history and make some important recommendations.

REPORTER:

What... why not go and find, you've spoken to a lot of times about these very old elders who are on the verge of death, to be frank. Why not go and find those people and, you know, maybe not hold a formal hearing, but talk to them individually just so that information is on the record?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

There's two reasons for that. I think being responsible with the resources we've got, the limits on travel that I'm going to impose on the team, I simply don't want to send big teams out, spending lots of resources where we know it's going to be cut. And they're really critical factor in engaging with members of the community is our trauma or trauma aware and healing informed approaches. And with our witnesses in Brisbane, we've met up to eight times before they gave their ultimate evidence. So we don't simply... engaging with the process we're not confident can complete it, is really in conflict with our trauma aware and healing informed approach. Any other questions, comments? Alright, thank you.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Go for it.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] resilient. You certainly look like the weight of the world was on your shoulders last press conference. How are you feeling just personally and emotionally? And the team.

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, I think the whole team's been really encouraged by the support that's out there in the community. And, and I want to acknowledge all of those institutions that have come out in a very public way, institutions like the, I think there was a dozen different churches that came out in support in a single joint statement. So we're really encouraged by that. And, you know, we feel a responsibility to the community. I think those discussions with Cherbourg and Stradbroke Island, I was effectively going out and apologising for, I felt like I'd let them down, my team let them down, although we didn't. But in a way, you know, that's being

decent and respectful of the process and to the community and the people that have participated.

REPORTER:

Can I just, just to confirm for the timeline, obviously, Fiona Simson agreed to have that meeting with you the day after the press conference. That day, what happened? Did you receive a phone call saying she could no longer meet or what happened there?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

I'll check the correspondence for the day. You can, we can check the date and the chronology. But effectively, there was an email that came through requesting a meeting. We responded that afternoon saying we were available. And I think the following day there was a request to postpone that meeting. And there's been no further attempts to, on their behalf, to organise another meeting. But certainly there's been several from myself after that. Thank you.

MELISSA MACKAY:

That was the Chair of Queensland's Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, Joshua Creamer, announcing that the inquiry will recommence its work reopening submissions from today until January, while Queensland's *Path to Treaty Act* is still in place.

Station: ABC Radio Brisbane
Program: Mornings
Compere: Steven Austin
Interviewee: Opposition Leader Steven Miles
Date: 2 December 2024, 8:35am
Duration: 16mins

E&OE

STEVE AUSTIN:

Well, the first sitting week of the new Parliament of Queensland has finished. Premier David Crisafulli introduced their youth justice laws. It also rushed through laws on establishing an Olympic and Paralympic body and dismantling the Path to Treaty process. Sitting opposite him was Steven Miles, the former Premier and now Opposition Leader. Steven Miles, thanks for coming back in studio.

STEVEN MILES:

Good morning, Steve. Thanks for having me.

STEVE AUSTIN:

What was it like sitting on the Opposition benches, I think for, probably your first time was it?

STEVEN MILES:

Yeah, it was my first time. When I first arrived in Parliament 10 years we were in government. And so, it's the first time I'd been on the other side of the chamber, and it's a very different job being there to ask the questions rather than answer them but I enjoyed it.

STEVE AUSTIN:

And every one of the Labor side has never sat on the opposition benches before. Every MP on the Labor side has never sat on the opposition benches before, is that right?

STEVEN MILES:

Yeah. That's right. There's a few members who were there before 2012, but they all lost in 2012 and came back in 2015. So they missed out on those three exciting years in opposition.

STEVE AUSTIN:

You don't normally hear about opposition being described as exciting, was it?

STEVEN MILES:

Well, you'll remember 2012 to 2015, Steve. It was a pretty exciting three years for Queensland politics.

STEVE AUSTIN:

How big was your staff when you were Premier.

STEVEN MILES:

So the Premier's office has about 50 staff, more than 50 staff.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Okay. You may recall that there was a lot of discussion about whether or not you had way too many staff. You had more staff in the Premier's Office than the Prime Minister of Australia and the like. Are you going to object if the new government does the same thing and pumps up their staff numbers and their media team numbers?

STEVEN MILES:

Look, the number of staff we had was the number I inherited from the previous Premier and I'd expect...

STEVE AUSTIN:

Annastacia Palaszczuk.

STEVEN MILES:

That's correct. Right. I'd expect the new Premier to stick to, stick to that kind of number.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Do you expect them to treat you the same way that you treated them?

STEVEN MILES:

I, we saw on Thursday that they, I think they treated us worse. So...

STEVE AUSTIN:

So that's a no?

STEVEN MILES:

Look, we'll see. It was the first day. And I guess, to the victor go the spoils. And they were entitled to be a bit arrogant on the first day. We'll see if it continues.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Is that how you would describe their first couple of days in state parliament?

STEVEN MILES:

That first day was pretty incredible. I've never seen a bill introduced and passed as quickly as that without any chance, any notice, any chance for anyone to object.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Which bill are you referring to? The youth justice bill.

STEVEN MILES:

No, no. So the Youth Justice Bill, they've given a week, which is, I think, probably still too short. But the bill they passed on Thursday, they introduced it at 1230. The first we knew about it was 1230, and they passed it at a minute past midnight that night.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Which bill are you referring to?

STEVEN MILES:

So this is a bill that dismantles the Truth-telling inquiry and bans them from continuing to have their hearings. It was under the guise of the Olympics, although they didn't need the bill to do that. They also removed the right of unions to enter a workplace when it's unsafe on the day that they hear about it. So they're pretty substantial things to have done without any notice. No one knew that was happening.

STEVE AUSTIN:

They were very clear about the Path to Treaty, that it would be repealed. They, it was an election commitment. So my assumption is that in their mind, they're keeping their promise to the voters.

STEVEN MILES:

I don't see any reason why the inquiry couldn't have continued. We moved an amendment that would have simply required the existing witness statements and documents that had been collected to be tabled. They voted against that amendment. So, look, I just think it was excessive and cruel.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Why do you think that Labor lost the state election?

STEVEN MILES:

Well, we'd been in office for 10 years. And over that time, you accrue some baggage from the issues that you try to deal with over that time. And then in some key locations, I think crime was clearly the biggest concern. You know, I've been in Townsville and Rockhampton and Mackay and in all of those places, people say that they thought we were too slow to respond to their concerns about crime. And that's a message I've heard pretty clearly.

STEVE AUSTIN:

On those towns, you, when you lost the election, you took off up to those places and you said you were going on a listening tour to figure out what Queenslanders wanted from Labor. Why didn't you listen prior to the election?

STEVEN MILES:

Well, I tried too, Steve. I tried to be out and about as much as I could, listening to people as much as I could. But I think by the time I took over as Premier at the end of last year, I think a lot of people had already made up their minds. Hopefully I convinced some to change their minds, but we'll never really know.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Did you learn anything other than anger in regional Queensland about crime and youth crime?

STEVEN MILES:

That was the predominant issue people raised with me. In fact, a lot of people said that on other issues, on things like health care and cost of living, they thought we were doing a pretty good job, but they really thought that we needed to act sooner on crime. And that's a message I've heard.

STEVE AUSTIN:

So nothing else? You think so you lost government and lost regional Queensland really just on the issue of crime?

STEVEN MILES:

Well, I also think, you know, we'd been in office for 10 years. There's a bit of a shift away from incumbents in a lot of, in a lot of places around the world. So all of those issues are played into it. But when I really push people and say, come on, tell me, what was the one thing, often times the only thing they can come up with is crime. And that's a message I've heard pretty clearly.

STEVE AUSTIN:

The government has passed legislation, as you've mentioned, that will establish a new Olympics and Paralympics body. And they've chosen a range of sort of business people and events. People, in other words, to the outside observer, it looks like they've chosen people who are qualified in the area of event management and large projects. Why does the opposition object to the picking of the people they've put on this committee, this review committee?

STEVEN MILES:

So we'd already passed legislation to create an independent delivery authority. That was one of the things that I committed to and did, and we then did what you would do to get an independent board. We went to a recruitment company. They advertised for expressions of interest. They did a merit selection process, and they recommended seven people. Those seven people were sitting there waiting to be appointed by the incoming government, and ...

STEVE AUSTIN:

Who were those seven people?

STEVEN MILES:

I can give you that list of names, Steve. I don't have it in front of me, but they'd all been through that merit selection process as would be appropriate for an independent board. Instead, David Crisafulli threw out that list and came up with another list, and he hasn't told us how he did that. So I've been very clear about the process we use to come up with that independent board. And instead of appointing that independent board, it looks to me from the outside like he picked seven people that he knew. It looks to me more like...

STEVE AUSTIN:

It looks to me like they're people that you knew as well.

STEVEN MILES:

Oh, they're certainly people I know, and some of them I know quite well and respect. But if you want them to be independent, you need to have a process that demonstrates that. And that's what we had with that independent recruitment body recommending seven names. I don't know if any of these people had applied for that process had been considered in that process, but it just looks pretty strange to me that you have an independent process that recommends seven appointments, and instead of making those appointments, you pick seven other people.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Is there anyone on the new government's Olympic Review Committee that you think should not be there?

STEVEN MILES:

Well, I don't know what process they went through to pick these people. I know some media, the Australian have pointed out the significant donations to the LNP that some of these individuals have made. Now that shouldn't rule them out. But it does make it even more important that people can have faith in the process. And David Crisafulli just won't tell us how he came up with these seven names.

STEVE AUSTIN:

My guest is Steven Miles. is the new state Labor Opposition Leader. This is 612 ABC Brisbane. The LNP has highlighted your previous government's budget blowouts. The billions on the health infrastructure, the Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro project and now copper wire project to Mount Isa. Do you agree with their analysis that you either withheld or deliberately misled the cost blowouts on these projects?

STEVEN MILES:

Not at all, Steve. In fact, we regularly updated our expected cost on these projects. But what's happened here is exactly what David Crisafulli promised wouldn't happen. He said that he would deliver projects for their originally announced budgets. And I consistently said, well, you can't make that promise because until you've got a construction company who's tendered for a project and given a price, then you don't know for sure what that project is going to cost. It's like if you decide you want to spend 20 grand putting a deck on your house and you go to three builders and they come back and say, no, 28, 35 and 40 grand, you can't go back to

them and say, well, no, you have to build it for 20. And those health projects that you mentioned, they were out to tender when we went into caretaker. They came back during that period of time. We never saw those, the increases that had happened there. But we know that when you go to tender, it depends on what the market is able to.

STEVE AUSTIN:

You never saw the cost increases, you're maintaining that?

STEVEN MILES:

There were some that we were aware of and we announced. there were others that have come back from tender in that period.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Okay. If you had been told or you knew of the cost increases, would you have told the Queensland public? Because they are not insignificant blowouts they are very expensive, substantive blowouts. Would you have told the Queensland public?

STEVEN MILES:

Well, we did, Steve. We held a press conference in Ipswich where we outlined the final tender prices on a range of health projects, and we acknowledged that had seen a significant increase, but that we wanted to deliver those projects.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Should the CopperString project to Mount Isa, which is a massive blow-out, should that still go ahead, Steven Miles?

STEVEN MILES:

Well, again, that's a really, that's a nation building project connecting the North West Minerals Province with the incredible renewable resources in Hughenden and heavy industry in places like Townsville and along the coast. And so we think that project is important and should go ahead. But it, but you're right. It's seen significant cost increases and it's now up to the, the government who promised that there wouldn't be cost increases to outline how they're going to deliver it.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Well, they did say that they would respect public money. And I think that their argument is, that that's why they're highlighting what you didn't tell, either by omission or ignorance to the Queensland public about that project.

STEVEN MILES:

Oh, let's be honest about what's really happening here, Steve. Whenever an LNP government gets elected, they find budget black holes and supposed blowouts and then they use them to cut money elsewhere. That's what's happening here. They're just laying the groundwork for that.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Steven Miles, the Opposition Leader in Queensland, is my guest. We'll just do a quick traffic report and I'll come back to Steven Miles in just a moment.

[TRAFFIC REPORT BREAK]

STEVE AUSTIN:

My guest is Steven Miles. You as Premier, Cameron Dick as treasurer, your team and the previous Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk, spent 10 years blaming Campbell Newman for every ill that Queensland faced, everything from the weather to money to jobs, the whole lot. Constantly in Parliament, you blame Campbell Newman, who hasn't been here for goodness knows what, eight, 10 years? Why shouldn't the new government do exactly the same thing to you, Steven Miles?

STEVEN MILES:

Well, I expect that they will, Steve, but I also expect we're about to see David Crisafulli has a lot more like Campbell Newman than he tried to pretend to be. And that's already been pretty clear. He's been out there sacking public servants. He rushed those laws through in the middle of the night. And that's all in his first couple of weeks.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Why shouldn't a new government be able to put in place the people they want to administer their pre-election commitments?

STEVEN MILES:

Well, he made commitments around merit-based appointments, around not sacking public servants, and he hasn't lived up to those commitments. He said his word would be worth something and it turns out it's not.

STEVE AUSTIN:

You want to highlight a group of public servants that he sacked.

STEVEN MILES:

Well, he before the election, he said only one of the Directors-General would be dismissed. He's sacked more than half of them. And some of them...

STEVE AUSTIN:

They're on contract anyhow. I mean, that's in their contract Steven Miles.

STEVEN MILES:

Some of them are very, very talented public servants, people I...

STEVE AUSTIN:

Sure, but it's in their contract.

STEVEN MILES:

Well, I'm not sure you ought to let me off the hook that easily, Steve. You know, walked in, promised to only sack one, sacked more than that at great expense to taxpayers.

STEVE AUSTIN:

So you're talking about Director-Generals?

STEVEN MILES:

And Assistant Directors. There's a whole range of public servants who are who have been hunted down by this government.

STEVE AUSTIN:

The LNP has scrapped the best practice industry condition contracts. Apart from the fact that for many years we were being told on this radio station that it led to a somewhere between 20 and 30 per cent increase on government projects, it actually led to a decrease in productivity and made no difference to the death rate on industrial sites That's the data. The evidence. Why do you think that is, Steven Miles.

STEVEN MILES:

Well, I had this argument a lot of times with you, Steve, when I was the Premier and in my previous roles, because I did support best practice industry conditions, I did support having the safest workplaces and apprenticeships and First Nations trainees and, women on our job sites. But I guess now we get to find out if you're right. We get to see if building costs...

STEVE AUSTIN:

Or if the data was right.

STEVEN MILES:

Well, if you were right.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Well, it's not my data I'm quoting, I'm quoting official data.

STEVEN MILES:

Well, I never saw official data that supported that. You're welcome to share it with me. But now we get to, you know, it's a moot point. Now we get to see, do building costs go down 20 to 30 per cent as you said they would?

STEVE AUSTIN:

Well no they won't. No. I didn't say they would go down. I didn't say that at all. That's totally untrue, Steven Miles.

STEVEN MILES:

[inaudible] the reason they went up 30 per cent, then getting rid of BPICs should see them come down.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Well, we'll ask...

STEVEN MILES:

That's your logic.

STEVE AUSTIN:

No, it's not my logic. The industry says they didn't give a position on what would go down. They simply said it inflated it. The industry said given that they were brought in for safety reasons, Steven Miles.

STEVEN MILES:

Well, certainly the workers that I've talked to on construction sites tell me that it did make their work safer, particularly when it came to things like heat. You know, I met with a woman who'd lost her husband to heat stroke after he'd spent time on a construction site. And I think keeping workers safe is pretty important.

STEVE AUSTIN:

We'll speak to you in the new year, no doubt. Thanks for coming in.

STEVEN MILES:

Thanks so much for having me.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Opposition Leader Steven Miles 612

Event: Press conference

Speaker/s: Premier David Crisafulli
Attorney-General Deb Frecklington
Women's Legal Service Queensland CEO Nadia Bromley

Airdate: 3 December 2024, 11:25am approx.

Duration: 42mins

E&OE

PREMIER:

Morning, everybody. Today, it's my pleasure to confirm \$142 million in new money for community legal services in Queensland. It's a vital initiative, and it's made even more vital because it unlocks significant funding amount of money through the Commonwealth Government. \$827 million in fact, from the Commonwealth Government. I want to pay tribute to the way that Deb has done these negotiations, and she can unpack how this come about. But make no mistake, this is vital money for a vital sector to assist vulnerable Queenslanders.

We're talking about people who are impacted by things like elder abuse, health justice and, for the first time, family prevention of violence. And it's important that we give an opportunity for every Queenslander to get justice, and that's what community legal services is about. And it's important that as part of any justice system, that people are entitled to be able to get representation. And that's the work that people like Nadia do day in, day out. We want to acknowledge the way that you've worked with us. We're very, very grateful for that. But to the broader sector, we understand the work that community legal does on a shoestring budget, and this enables that work to continue. And I want to thank Deb for what she has done.

I'll make this point. Without the work in a short period of time from the Attorney-General, there is every likelihood that groups that provide a service for the most vulnerable would have fallen through the cracks. And I want Queenslanders to understand we are serious about a legal system that is fair and enables representation. And I want to thank you for the work that you have done.

Before I hand over to Deb, I want to make some comments about today's public hearing as part of the Making Queensland Safer laws in Townsville. It is very important that that hearing made its way to North Queensland. Townsville has been ground zero for the youth crime crisis, and we wanted to make sure that North Queenslanders know that we have listened to them. We have reflected on the challenges that that community is going through at the moment. And make no mistake, recent weeks and recent months has tested the North Queensland community, particularly Townsville, and it's an opportunity for them today to put forward their views about the challenges that lie ahead.

The laws are being delivered as promised. The timeline is being followed as promised. Victims of crime are being put front and centre as promised. Separate to that, we have a strong will to do gold standard early intervention, and it is going to be funded in Queensland like never before. Separate to those laws, we are going to do rehabilitation to a level that we have never seen before, and that's when a young person is in jail, but that's also when they are released, and I have never stood before you and not spoken about all of those elements.

It is important that you have a system that provide consequences for actions, and you have to do that, particularly for those hardcore repeat offenders, but good systems provide justice and opportunity for those early on in that journey or when they are released from prison. And it is important that we have the services that are in place. And when I reflect that in Queensland at the moment, the majority of young offenders who leave prison don't even have access to a 72 hour plan, is it any wonder that the rate of repeat offending is north of 90 per cent? And we are going to do everything we can to provide education and structure and connectivity when a person is serving time and when they leave prison, 12 months of rehabilitation, six months intensive, 12 months overall, to give people the opportunity to turn their life around as well. Deb.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Thank you very much. Premier. Well, today I'm really pleased to be here at the Women's Legal Service, along with Nadia Bromley, who is the CEO of this incredible legal service, providing a service to Queensland's most vulnerable. But today is a big day for this sector. It's because the new Crisafulli Government has come in and saved the sector by promising and committing \$142 million of extra funding. What that funding has enabled us to do is keep the doors open of these vital sectors, of these vital services, providing that incredible service to people who are our most vulnerable.

Now, within a fortnight of having this job, I had to go down to Canberra to... I'll start that again, because we were actually in Melbourne. I had to sit around a table with the Federal Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus and other Attorney-Generals to fight for Queensland's fair share of over a billion dollars worth of funding for this sector. Now, what did the former Labor government do? They failed to fight for the funding. They failed to put any money into the forwards for community legal services.

Now, these are services who do the hardest work for our most vulnerable women, suffering domestic violence, elderly, needing advice children, people that are suffering from family violence. Make no mistake, these services are required by, by the people of Queensland, but also it was only our government that was able to secure that funding, thereby enabling that flow on effect for the national funding. So over a billion dollars of funding for this vital service.

And I really want to thank the Premier for being so accommodating to ensuring that we could put that extra \$140 million on the table. If we had not have put that extra money on the table, we would not have secured the extra \$800 million for this vital sector. So the former Labor government left a big black hole for the legal sector, and that is not good enough, and that is exactly why the Crisafulli Government has stepped right in to support community legal

services and centres, just like the vitally important Women's Legal Service that we're at here today. So Nadia, over to you.

NADIA BROMLEY:

Thank you so much. Attorney-General and Premier, thank you so much for joining us here today. The signing of this agreement and the announcement of funding is a really important thing. It's a really important thing for the sector, because what it means is that thousands of workers who support the most vulnerable Queenslanders know that their work is valued. They know that they have a job, job security for the next five years, and more importantly, they can get back to focusing on what they do best. Here at Women's Legal Service Queensland, what it means for us is that we can now focus all of our energy on the 7000 women we'll help before this new agreement starts on July next year. And it will also help in helping us achieve our mission of safer futures for women and children. In Australia and certainly in this great state of Queensland, we believe that access to justice shouldn't depend on your postcode or your pay check, and this agreement is a critical step to making sure we can make that a reality for all Queenslanders. Thank you so much.

REPORTER:

Nadia, is there a specific dollar amount that Women's Legal Service will get from this funding?

NADIA BROMLEY:

I'm certain there is, but I'm just not aware what that is at this stage. It's a very difficult process, as I understand it.

PREMIER:

Thank you, Nadia, thank you very much. Over to you guys.

REPORTER:

Premier, on the youth justice situation, have you figured out the mandatory isolated periods and the length of time you'll be holding young people?

PREMIER:

No. No. Good, good question. That, that work will take considerable time. So it's the same, it's the same rules that exist at the moment in terms of how they'll be accommodated. The difference will be, if they assault somebody, if they assault a prison officer, there will be a period where that person will be taken away from their peers, but we're going to do considerable work on that. And I said, I said during the campaign, that that is something that we'll be consulting widely with. That will take, that will, that will take, that consultation will take some time.

REPORTER:

Premier, experts from the Human Rights Commissioner to the Law Society lined up yesterday on the Making Queensland Safer laws would not work to make the community safer. So which experts support your government's youth crime laws?

PREMIER:

A lot of Queenslanders, a lot of people at the front line, and a lot of communities that are demanding change. And I reflect on what we are trying to do, and I come back to the importance of not just stronger laws, but also gold standard early intervention and rehabilitation with purpose. But just on some of those commentary, in many cases, it's the same people who led to the same situation for the last decade. We are a different government, and we are taking a different approach that puts victims first, across the spectrum. And I think if you reflect, whilst there will be different views on some elements, there is also been some strong views of support about our desire for early intervention. And there's been a lot of stakeholders who have spoken about the need for rehabilitation. So it's across the board. And you know, I, we, we are, we are doing exactly what we said we would before the election, the laws, the timelines, how we'll work to support victims first and foremost, everything is consistent with how we campaigned. And I think Queenslanders find that refreshing.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] promise to be a government that listens to the experts though.

PREMIER:

Yep.

REPORTER:

The mandate was to make Queensland safer. Experts say this won't do that, so how are you aligning with that?

PREMIER:

Madura, we are doing exactly what we campaigned on, including the timeline.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] experts support these laws and that they will work?

PREMIER:

We took a very firm commitment to the election and, and with respect to some of the different views on one part of our youth crime strategy, it's been the same voices that have led to the laws being weakened a decade ago. We are a different government, and the difference in our approach is victims are front and centre, in every aspect of it. And, and I don't think any reporting is fair without acknowledging that we are also talking about things like residential care and the need to give young people in that system some hope and some structure and some discipline, without talking about Child Safety and the work we're doing there to try and properly resource that department, without talking about early intervention and bringing the best from, that doesn't operate in Queensland, but also doing more of what's here. We took a significant package to the election, both financially and administratively, and we're rolling that out. And again, you are never going to have a situation where you don't have crime. Of course you will. There will always be crime. Our passion and our commitment is to have fewer victims, and the way that you do that is have a system that supports people at all stages of that. So for the hardcore repeat offenders, consequences for

actions, but also a pathway to make sure that we can intercept early, that we can rehabilitate when somebody does go off the rails. All of that is part of a comprehensive plan, and it is exactly the plan we took to the election.

REPORTER:

One of the experts yesterday said that children actually prefer to be, some of the hardcore kids who repeat and offend, they actually prefer to be in youth justice because they get better... their conditions are better than what they are at home, and they say they actually commit crimes to get back into youth justice. So what changes in that? How are you going to change that?

PREMIER:

Well, I saw the comment. The comment comes from a group that is one of the ones we're going to partner with to do the rehabilitation.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

PREMIER:

The one specifically from your story was Fearless to Success. And, and that's an organisation that has received very limited funding, and it's one of the groups that we want to partner with. So there has to be, there has to be a structure for young people in corrective, corrective facilities. At the moment, less than three hours per day of education. That's not good enough. That will change. But it's, it's right throughout. You've, we've, we've got to have structure and discipline and we have to have compassion and love. It's all throughout. It's a broken system at the moment. And I'm mindful that there will be people who view different elements differently, but every Queenslander acknowledges that at the moment, there is youth crime crisis, and we've got to do something about it. And we are fulfilling what we promise people, and that is putting victims first, victims front and centre in all we do, in early intervention, rehabilitation, purpose and consequences for actions, and we're fulfilling that.

REPORTER:

Lawyers say these, lawyers say these laws place further pressure on the watch houses and the detention centres.

PREMIER:

Yeah, it will.

REPORTER:

Do you have any modelling on what will be needed to cope?

PREMIER:

Yes, we've spent considerable time looking at that, and it is a, it's a very valid, very valid point. And there are delays in bringing on some of those additional, that additional capacity, and Laura has been upfront with that. That was part of the incoming brief that she had. The

government, former government hadn't made that public. We have, but so I'll address it in a couple of ways. We promise that these laws would be laws by Christmas, and we acknowledged that will put some pressure on those detention facilities, which is why we have to get in early with early intervention and rehabilitation when a young person leaves. And if we can break the back on that recidivism, which is over 90 per cent, that will help. If we can do early intervention, that will see less people going into the system. If you have stronger laws and send a message around consequences for actions that will act as a deterrent. There are going to be some challenges. There is, but long term we believe we have a system that will create fewer victims and will be good for the longer term community, both for victims and young offenders before they get into a lifetime of crime. There will be some challenges. And you know my view about watch houses, and you know that I don't believe that a watch house is somewhere where a young person should spend weeks that they are at the moment. And we have to do all we can to bring on extra capacity, but we also have to intercept so there are less people getting into that system. And when you have a look at the percentage of young people who are on remand in many of those facilities, that shows you how broken the system is. And that was one of the other things we campaigned on, which is increasing the capacity of prosecution so we can actually get a young person before a court earlier, so that there are those consequences for actions. Because at the moment, what's happening is you've got such a large percentage on remand that by the time they front a court, they don't actually ever experience that consequence. And by being on remand, they're not getting the wrap around services they should. The system is broken right throughout. And we spent a lot of time looking at this, and we've committed a significant amount of money, but also a cultural shift in the way that we treat young people early on and giving them those [inaudible]

REPORTER:

You just said that you did modelling, so how much, what is that number? How many more children will be held in a watch house [inaudible]?

PREMIER:

So there will be, there will be some short term pressures, but we believe long term, we can deliver a system that provides fewer victims, but also better outcomes for [inaudible].

REPORTER:

Will you release the modelling?

PREMIER:

So we... we'll continue too, we'll continue to spend the resources we need to determine where we bring on the extra capacity.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

PREMIER:

So... so... so... no, no no. The modelling shows that there will be pressure early on, when the rules come into place. In terms of... that, that was actually reflected on extra capacity

needed, and it was done based on the facility in Wacol that needs to come online, which is delayed by nearly six months.

REPORTER:

Are you talking, Premier, dozens? Hundreds extra kids?

PREMIER:

No, I'm talking about the need for those extra beds at Wacol to come on and the pressure that will be felt when it's not there. And there's also been some temporary facilities done at Caboolture, which will also need to, we need that capacity. So that there will be some pressure. But our commitment is stronger laws to act as a deterrent, gold standard early intervention to turn young people around and rehabilitation while they're in jail, and when they leave.

REPORTER:

Are you expecting the extra pressure in watch houses over summer?

PREMIER:

There will be extra pressure in the short term, and...

REPORTER:

How long is the short term? Is that summer?

PREMIER:

Well, certainly, certainly in the months ahead, certainly. And the reason why, if I can... this is important, I have to explain this. Five years ago, there was the first revelations of the watch house crisis. Five years ago, and five years ago, the then government said it would do something about the capacity issues, and in the last five years, the number of kids in watch houses has escalated year on year. So it will take time. But my, my strong belief, is that a watch house is not where a young person needs to be long term, because it's very difficult to turn your life around when you're spending 23 hours a day without any sunshine, which is why we have to bring on the extra capacity, and we will. And I've also, we also campaigned on what we called circuit breaker sentencing, and I think that's a really good midway point where there is a, an ability for a custodial sentence that looks and feels different to a traditional jail. Those rural outposts. That will be another string to the bow. That'll take time, but we're going to bring that on. Everything we're doing is coordinated and structured and has a plan. And things won't improve overnight, but they are going to get better, and the community is going to be safer. And there is a road map that deals with that. The first step is, as we promised, stronger laws by Christmas, and then there's the rollout of early intervention, rehabilitation with purpose, and then fixing those broken arms of government.

REPORTER:

Premier, do you... opting to take preference over the rights of the child here in Queensland, it's not just your government, but the previous government passed harsher laws, overwrote

the state's *Human Rights Act* to implement those harsher sentences on children. Are we treating children, are we treating policy, you know, with preference over the rights of a child?

PREMIER:

Fraser, everything I've campaigned on and everything we've said focuses on consequences for actions, but also the structures to turn a young person's life around. And the only comment I'll make about the former government is, they took a conscious decision that created this mess, and still, as of today, I'm not sure there's a Queenslander that knows what their position is. It gets... there's no consistency in what they're saying. There's no acknowledgement about the problem. We've still got, we've now got a former MP who's casting doubt over the authenticity of the person who replaced him and the person who replaced him ran for public life because of one of the most incredible tragedies the state seen, and still we've got chirping from the sideline. Look, I'll park that. I just want, I just want to say our focus is right throughout the system, and we will roll that out in a calm and methodical way.

REPORTER:

Just on those groups that have been critical of the laws in the last day and weeks and were critical of the former government in this space as well, some of which are statutory, independent statutory authorities. Are you saying that their analysis or their view on this is wrong?

PREMIER:

Well, Matt, they have a different view, and they should be able to express that view. They should be able to and that's part of the democracy that we live in, and that should be. I just make the point that we are fulfilling exactly what we campaigned on, and it's not just stronger laws. And I think you will reflect there's been, during the course of the campaign, there was a lot of, a lot of third parties who also spoke about what we were talking about, early intervention and the rehabilitation element as well.

REPORTER:

In terms of the Townsville committee meeting today, there are some locals who are saying that's simply not enough time to have all the voices heard. There's calls for other regions to have a seat at the table as well. Obviously, there's been previous committees. Do you think more needs to be done in that space to get that community voice on the table?

PREMIER:

We, we committed that these laws would be laws by Christmas. We committed the period that they would go to committee. And we are fulfilling that. And we are determined to make sure that there's consequences for actions and then also early intervention. So we, we're fulfilling exactly what we took to people, to the people of Queensland. And I know, I know that's not a sexy, sexy headline, 'Politician keeps promise' but that's, that's my style. And we are doing exactly what we said we were going to do. We outlined, we outlined the key elements that would form part of Adult Crime, Adult Time. We outlined exactly the funding bucket for early intervention. We spoke exactly about rehabilitation with purpose in jail and outside of it. And we are fulfilling to the letter of the law. The laws, the timeline, priority for

victims and how we're going to deal with early intervention. We're fulfilling exactly what we said.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] having these hearings if you're only ever going to go with what you took to the election?

PREMIER:

Well, but the hearings are an important part of an opportunity for people to come forward. And Matt just raised...

REPORTER:

But you're not taking them into account so what's being [inaudible]?

PREMIER:

Well... well... well... the, the Attorney General is here and reflected on what was yesterday. And there's an opportunity today. There's an opportunity for people to put submissions. But just bear in mind, we said that there would be the laws in place by Christmas. And I made the point to you, we are not going to Christmas with the same youth justice laws that have led us to where we are, and we're working overtime on early intervention and rehabilitation as well. So it's some of, some of the most, some of the highest profile and chilling incidents in youth crime have happened over that period. Boxing Day. Australia Day. There's been, there's been some, some really troubling ones. And again, no one is suggesting that you won't have... these crimes will... these crimes exist. My focus is reducing the likelihood of a repeat, hardcore person who shouldn't be out, to not be. And to intercept the next generation, to stop them from becoming...

REPORTER:

So do you expect there to be changes to the legislation based upon the hearings?

PREMIER:

The hearings are taking place at the moment, and you've got a committee process that will be putting forward suggestions, and the committee will then collectively put forward their views as well. Now we are fulfilling what we said we, we took to the election, but any good committee process can allow people to have a suggestion. But, but just to be clear, we campaigned on Adult Crime, Adult Time. We campaigned that it'd be laws by Christmas. We will fulfill that. And if there are suggestions around the further legislative changes, if there are suggestions around other ways of early intervention and rehabilitation in the future, we will. And as I said in the first reading speech the other day, this is the first of future changes when it comes to making community safer. The next cab off the rank will involve the child sex offender register as well.

REPORTER:

Premier, what are some of the pressures... can you spell out some of the pressures that you're expecting from the new laws?

PREMIER:

Well, there'll be, be the, there will be the ability for the judiciary to impose sentences that more accurately reflect what the community's expectations are.

REPORTER:

But what are some of the pressures that you mentioned, the short term pressures?

PREMIER:

More young people in custodial sentences, given custodial sentences, which is why the perfect time to have built extra capacity was five years ago. The next best time is today, and we're doing what should have been done. And we're also looking at other options into the future.

REPORTER:

So what you doing to, what are you doing to prepare for that overcrowding over summer?

PREMIER:

I mentioned to you. We, the Minister is doing everything she can to deliver the extra capacity online. We are continuing with the Caboolture arrangement to make sure that that's there in in capacity. And we are working on future things, on future opportunities, and the circuit breaker program. And above all, the greatest thing we can do is intercept so there are less young people in the years to come who need to be put in jail. Because ultimately, our first priority is for victims, and the best way to have fewer victims is to have fewer people offending. And if you can intercept early and help turn people around, everybody wins on that.

REPORTER:

Premier, we have some more questions on rooftop solar.

PREMIER:

Yeah.

REPORTER:

How advanced your emergency backstop plans to deal with the more unstable grid thanks to excess solar?

PREMIER:

Our priority is the maintenance guarantee that we have implemented to make sure that we have the base load capacity that the state needs. And our commitment is energy that's affordable, reliable and sustainable. And there are some huge challenges at the moment with the grid, some huge challenges. They're not going to be fixed overnight, but the starting point is to make sure that the assets that the state own at the moment get back to their capacity. And as we bring on more assets that can also be part of that energy mix. But to have those publicly owned assets, which will remain publicly owned assets, but to have those publicly owned

assets working to provide base load power is essential. And the people at those GOC's should be held accountable for keeping, for making sure that that money is spent, that maintenance guarantee is spent, and so too will the shareholding ministers. And the Treasurer has given good visibility, as has the Minister for Finance on that.

REPORTER:

Premier, do you have any concerns that network operators might have to take control to manage households rooftop solar if the grid can't be secured?

PREMIER:

The grid has to be secured, and I'm mindful there's some national conversation there, but for Queensland's, from Queensland's perspective, we have to get the assets that Queenslanders own operating the way they should. And for well over a thousand days, that hasn't been the case, and our maintenance guarantee will make sure that we do get it back online, and we keep them online, and we get them working for Queenslanders. Their first duty is to drive down the price of power for Queenslanders and give them reliability. And right now, the grid is under immense pressure, and we have to do everything we said we're going to to make sure that that pressure in the years to come is reduced.

REPORTER:

One more quick one. Will you offer incentives to Queensland households to purchase batteries in a bid to soak up excess supply from rooftop solar?

PREMIER:

We've spoken about solar for renters, and that's something which we want to give opportunity for, for people to benefit. In terms of, in terms of battery storage, I'm mindful that those prices are becoming more competitive. We'll consider those, we'll consider partnerships with that in the future. We do believe that there is a, there's a, there's a big role for renewable to play in Queensland, both domestically and more broadly. But if you don't have base load power underpinning that system, it is, it is just too vulnerable to the ebbs and flows of weather conditions and the market. You need, you need base load power, and you need renewables as part of that.

REPORTER:

So you will be considering incentives for batteries into the future?

PREMIER:

We haven't, we haven't considered it yet. But what I'm saying is we will look at, we'll look at anything that can help firm up a system. But we haven't considered that.

REPORTER:

Premier, do you concede that the new laws [inaudible] will adversely affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are already marginalised and overrepresented in our prison system? How would you handle that? How will that be culturally appropriate as well?

PREMIER:

We have to do more for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland, and not just in the justice system. And the greatest way we can do that is by making sure that they have access to an education and health system and housing and giving the structures to keep them on the straight and narrow like other kids. You're right, there is an over representation, and we collectively have a duty to do all we can to try to help First Nations people. We must. We must. The laws are in place for everybody, and people will be treated equally, but collectively, we've got a duty to try and help early for a vulnerable group of people and, and that's, that's important. And I particularly talk about in those communities, I always come back first and foremost, to the disadvantage in the communities, because ultimately, that's where the disadvantage is most pronounced. And the ability for someone to achieve what they are capable of when they're growing up in a household where our overcrowding is four or five times what it should be, where the ability to get an education and the attendance rates are less than what they should be, and there's no aspiration in the society to be able to own a home. All of those things underpin a society of disadvantage, and we do owe it to, to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to do what we can, to give, to close that gap. In terms of the laws, the laws are there for everyone, but the systems should make sure that we give every chance for those who are vulnerable and marginalised to be given justice and the ability to turn their life.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] on Aboriginal Affairs, were you happy with the way that the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry was wound up? I mean, Josh Creamer didn't hear from you prior to or since, and yeah, do you think you could have handled that better?

PREMIER:

Well, just, just on the since, the Minister wrote to Mr Creamer and offered him a briefing if he wanted to accept that. But I just, I make the point, we campaigned that we would end that process, and that the money that was otherwise going to go to that process would go towards infrastructure, particularly in those indigenous communities. And just to be clear, because I'm not sure if I've been clear enough on this, when I say the money is going to go, every single cent of it. Right? So nothing's nothing from that inquiry is going, there's no consolidated revenue. Every single cent is going to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but particularly in those communities.

REPORTER:

But my question was, do you think you could have handled it better? I mean, you said prior you would shut it up respectfully and...

PREMIER:

Yes.

REPORTER:

... I don't think... I mean, do you think that was respectful?

PREMIER:

Well, well, I'll pose this... I'll pose this question. Would it have been right for us to have allowed the inquiry to spend money on a process that we said would continue, and I think the answer is no. And the, the inquiry decided to continue because the legislation was still in the parliament. The inquiry took a decision to continue that work, despite the fact the government said we would be stopping it. Now, when I reflect that one in two dollars have been spent on lawyers to date, that's not where our priority is. Now, the inquiry made a decision to continue on that process, despite the fact we said that we would, we wouldn't pursue it. Now, to have not closed that loophole, would not have given the signal that the inquiry said it needed. It said it was going to continue while the legislation was still before the House. So we took a decision to, to do that, and now the work begins on where does the first trench of money be spent. Now, my preference is for it to be in one of those 16 discrete communities.

REPORTER:

Is it not true, though, that you could have told the inquiry that, hey, we're going to wind up this legislation...

PREMIER:

But we did, Madura.

REPORTER:

... instead of just... [inaudible] Olympics [inaudible]?

PREMIER:

But Madura, if I may. We, we campaigned on, on the fact that we would be, we'd be stopping that process. There was public commentary that that the inquiry had acknowledged that and then subsequently said that it was going to resume. So that would have meant that money was spent on a process that we said we weren't pursuing. So...

REPORTER:

Did the government give specific instructions, though, for them to stop?

PREMIER:

Well, yeah, over 12 months ago.

REPORTER:

No, but I mean legally like instructions, emails?

PREMIER:

But, but that's...

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

PREMIER:

But that's the reason why, but that's the reason why, that's the reason why the legislation did need to be changed, because the inquiry made a point that because the legislation was still active in the House, that they believed that they should continue. Now, that just cleared that matter up.

REPORTER:

So you thought that was out of line?

PREMIER:

Well, no. I thought that to allow that to continue would have spent more money on more lawyers that we want to spend in indigenous communities. Now, that's a difference of opinion, but ultimately, we clean, we cleared up the legislative grey area.

REPORTER:

But the, but the inquiry wasn't told specifically to wrap up earlier?

PREMIER:

No, the inquiry was told very specifically...

REPORTER:

[inaudible] continue. They weren't given specific instructions.

PREMIER:

No, the, the, the commitment was very clear from a long time ago that we wouldn't be proceeding.

REPORTER:

But the instructions was the difference.

PREMIER:

I don't think there's a Queenslander who wasn't clear about the fact that we weren't pursuing it.

REPORTER:

I guess, the timing of it and the handling is the question.

PREMIER:

But the reason why the timing was what it was is because after ceasing the inquiry, the inquiry decided to start again because the legislation was still before the parliament. Hence the reason why we close that off.

REPORTER:

With respect, did you respectfully call Josh Creamer as you said you would?

PREMIER:

No. The correspondence went from the Minister to Mr Creamer.

REPORTER:

And who is Fiona Simpson? Can you tell us a little bit about her expertise in Aboriginal Services?

PREMIER:

You should ask her about it. She's the longest serving, she's the longest serving member of the Parliament, and I think she'll do good. I think she'll do good.

REPORTER:

Just on your comments around the funding being put straight into the community. KPMG did an audit on Mornington Island a few years ago that looked at funding. I think it was around \$400 million had been spent over five years without actually improving any of the key outcomes around health, housing, child safety. How can you ensure when you're putting money into this, into community, that it's actually gone into programs that the community wants and will use rather than what we've seen previously?

PREMIER:

It's an, it's an excellent question, and one of the figures that I've always quoted in recent times is there was over a billion dollars of additional money spent in the discrete communities on housing alone and the number of dwellings collectively reduced. That is... now, I understand about maintenance. I get maintenance, but that is just a distinct lack of planning, and that is examples of the not delivering value for money with the money that's there, and not treating that money with respect. So you're right. And I come back to, I think it needs to overwhelmingly be driven by local governments. I think they have the mandate from their community. And like all councils, they won't always have blanket support, but ultimately, they're the people who've been chosen for a four year period from their communities, and they're the ones that I want to work with.

REPORTER:

Is that a KPI for Fiona Simpson, to make sure that doesn't happen again?

PREMIER:

For all ministers, not just Fiona. Particularly, you know, I point to housing. Sam's [inaudible].

REPORTER:

Particularly indigenous housing and the waste there,

PREMIER:

Yeah, but Fiona's role will be making sure that every cent of this fund goes towards, goes towards those, to indigenous people. And I shouldn't say blanket just to the communities, because there will be other examples, I'm sure, where there may be other opportunities to fund. But my, my going in position is if that fund could fix up some of the, the water and

waste situations in some of those communities, and if it opened the door to the first round of home ownership in one or two of those communities, I reckon that'd be a pretty big step forward.

REPORTER:

And while, just quickly on the, back to the youth crime committee, sorry the Making Queensland Safer law committee, why weren't police authorised to appear on that committee?

PREMIER:

I'm not sure, Tim. I can...

REPORTER:

[inaudible] intend to proceed with the police integrity unit as recommended by the Richards inquiry?

PREMIER:

I, I'd have to, I'd have to get some info on that. I'm [inaudible].

REPORTER:

You're not sure whether you're [inaudible] recommendation of the Richard's inquiry?

PREMIER:

I, we said at the time that we supported all of those recommendations in principle. But if you're asking me, where it's at at the moment, I don't know. I'm not sure the work for that.

REPORTER:

A question for the Attorney. [inaudible] will you be changing the way that the numbers are measured?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The most important thing we do around victims is ensuring that they go down. I mean, that's exactly what this Making Queensland Safer laws are all about. We need to ensure there's less victims in Queensland, that is our number one priority. It's certainly my number one priority. And in actual fact, for the entire justice system, the priority right now with these new laws is putting victims first, and that's something I'm exceedingly proud of.

REPORTER:

But will you be changing the way that that metric is calculated?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, no. Victims if someone's house gets broken into and an offender holds a knife to their throat while asking for the car keys so they can steal the car to prevent that person going to work as a midwife, that person's a victim. By the way, she's also my neighbour. That's a victim. We're trying to prevent having any more of those cases happening here in Queensland. Like the Premier said, there's always going to be crime. We know that. But we

cannot sit by and do nothing, and that is why we're Making Queensland Safer as we said we would.

REPORTER:

Do you have any update on the release of the Trad, Carne or Chao Thai Fook reports?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Great questions, and I'm certainly being briefed by my department in relation to the release of those. One thing I have done in in regards to the first two reports, we've said, and I spoke in the parliament last week that we'll be strengthening the CCC's reporting powers. We are working through that, and we are doing that. I've met with the Chair of the CCC twice now, and we'll continue to have a path forward for the release of those documents, as we said we would. In relation to the Chao Thai Fook report, we, I'm working as well on that. I'm going through the briefing and the reports and the legal issues that surround the release of that. We will be releasing it in time. We just need to ensure that there aren't any outstanding legal issues in relation to that release.

REPORTER:

Is there any further details you can give about the Ashley Griffith inquiry? You released that statement on Friday.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Yeah, look great question, Brendan. And that is one of, and I said on the weekend, one of the most horrific matters that, you know, I think Queenslanders were just sickened to their stomach when they heard about that matter. It is imperative that, as a government, we put our children first, and that is why the Premier announced through the election that we'd have the blue card review, which goes into some of the issues around the supply and then where that blue card holder ends up if they are being investigated or if they're being charged. It is part of our 100 day review. We will meet, sorry, it is a part of our first 100 days commitment. We will meet that commitment. I'm talking with Luke Twyford, the Family Commissioner in relation to that review, and we're settling those terms of reference. And the sooner we get that done, the better but we are just working through that methodically right now, because we must get our terms of reference right if we're going to make a change to the blue card system. Thank you.

[ENDS]

Station: ABC Radio Brisbane
Program: Mornings
Compere: Steve Austin
Interviewee: Treasurer David Janetzki
Date: 4 December 2024, 8:25am
Duration: 25mins

E&OE

STEVE AUSTIN:

Well, my next guest apparently thinks he's walking a tightrope, a tightrope between success and unsustainable debt. My studio guest is the new Treasurer of Queensland, and he has apparently been told by Treasury that we are facing a debt load in just four years of over \$170 billion. Our interest rate payments are going to top just under \$8 billion. That's just the interest bill. Treasurer David Janetzki, good morning to you.

TREASURER:

Good morning, Steve.

STEVE AUSTIN:

On what basis did Treasury make this assessment?

TREASURER:

So Steve, it's been a very busy first month as we are slowly and methodically working our way through the Queensland budget and in my incoming Treasury brief. When I took on the role early last month, Treasury made clear a number of issues which you've alluded to there. So firstly, there is structural deficits built into the budget. There is a growing risk of a credit rating downgrade.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Who says?

TREASURER:

That is the Treasury advice. So and we've also got a... an inability to stabilise our debt. So that was the original Treasury briefing. Now, I considered it serious enough that I made my first official meeting as Treasurer with Standard and Poor's, with S&P, who is responsible for granting credit ratings to obviously, governments. And I sat down...

STEVE AUSTIN:

[inaudible] the debt market.

TREASURER:

And it sends messages to the debt market. That is exactly right. So debt markets they obviously watch closely what credit rating agencies say about the credit worthiness of sovereign states, of, and of businesses as well, of course. So my first meeting was with S&P. And if you recall, before the election there was, and I spoke with you about it, S&P had made a number of comments in relation to Queensland's budget and performance. And one of them, after the budget this year in June was, they had seen evidence of waning fiscal discipline. Then during the campaign, we had the former government make a series of promises, you know, state owned service stations, state owned general practices, another state owned energy retailer, state delivered school lunches, which prompted Standard and Poor's to also say you could see there looser fiscal discipline, which would put downward pressure on our rating over the long term.

STEVE AUSTIN:

But the state government, the previous government didn't win. You won. Those things aren't happening. On what basis does Treasury say, and I quote a, significant and growing debt burden quote, that won't stabilise unquote. That's shocking to read. On what basis have they made that? Given that those promises you just announced weren't, aren't affected.

TREASURER:

Yeah. That's correct. So, look, we've taken a number of steps in the first few weeks. So Treasury obviously had made those findings, recommendations on the basis of what they'd seen through the last few years.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Did you ask why, why this won't stabilise? That's a shocking statement to say our growing debt burden won't stabilise.

TREASURER:

It is a shocking statement. And that's why I called in Standard and Poor's for that first meeting, because I wanted them to know that we're going to take it seriously. And in fact, Steve, we've taken it that seriously that our first month we have saved \$54 billion through pausing BPIC and through not progressing Pioneer-Burdekin. So if you recall, that big capital project for instance, had gone from \$7 to \$12 to \$18 to \$24, then had blown out to \$36.8 billion. BPIC, we know by pausing that while we undertake a Productivity Commission review, we know that will save significant sums. BPIC is adding at least 25 per cent to projects that'll save \$17 billion over the next five years.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Who says? Who says that? Does Treasury say that, or do you say that?

TREASURER:

Treasury modelling has revealed that too.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Right, okay.

TREASURER:

So, we have to take what Standard and Poor's have said seriously. And certainly when I walked in and received that first Treasury briefing, that's exactly what I did.

STEVE AUSTIN:

My guest is Queensland's new Treasurer, David Janetzki. Queensland's apparently suffering a concerning increase in the interest burden likely to exceed critical thresholds. What are the thresholds?

TREASURER:

So Standard and Poor's they've got a series of metrics, Steve, when they start running through a credit rating and they can be an institutional framework, economic performance. Two of the measures that are key relate to debt burden and that sustainability question. And they have clearly outlined that that interest bill, which you said at the end of the forwards is going to be \$7.73 billion at the end of the forwards.

STEVE AUSTIN:

That's just the interest.

TREASURER:

That's just the interest. And bear in mind, in round terms, the Queensland budget we get about, let's say, \$80 to \$90 billion, depending on variances from year to year to spend on any, in any one year, a third of that's gone on health, a quarter on schools. So that interest burden is becoming serious. So the debt to revenue ratio that credit rating agencies like Standard and Poor's watch that is performing worryingly in Queensland. And that is why we've seen S&P make these comments and Treasury make those recommendations.

STEVE AUSTIN:

All right. That's all the economics. You're the man who's got the headache now. But what are the implications for Queenslanders, for my listener, for me? What are the implications of this? What are you going to do to change this, David Janetzki?

TREASURER:

So like I said, Steve, the first month we've made those key decisions.

STEVE AUSTIN:

It's old news.

TREASURER:

Yeah.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Okay.

TREASURER:

Nevertheless...

STEVE AUSTIN:

So what are you going to do?

TREASURER:

So Steve, it's not old news because what we're actually seeing right now, these cost blowouts that we've been talking about in the last month, whether it's, you know, Cross River Rail that went out another \$494 million, Gold Coast light Rail another \$330 million, CopperString went from \$6.2 billion in July to \$9 billion now. Pioneer-Burdekin, across the board, we've got these new blowouts which were hidden from the people of Queensland before the election, which we are now addressing. Now, the question that you raise in terms of what does it mean?

STEVE AUSTIN:

What does it mean for mums and dads, people working, single mothers...

TREASURER:

Correct.

STEVE AUSTIN:

... people, students working in Queensland today? If this is an unsustainable level of debt, it can't be stabilised as the official briefing. So what does that mean?

TREASURER:

Well, that's why we have made these early decisions. Can I say too Steve, to even explain what a credit rating means for mums and dads and people...

STEVE AUSTIN:

You could do that with your accountant, but are you going to cut services to save money?

TREASURER:

No, Steve. That's off the table. Right. So we know when it comes to the front line services, we need we know that we're actually short on police and nurses and teachers and doctors and fires the people that we need to deliver those frontline services. And the last government, I think, you know, promised 1147 police more that were never delivered. Right. So we are absolutely committed to delivering those services. I've been clear about that first month. I don't think there would have been any new government in Queensland history that's managed to find \$54 billion in savings in its first month, so I, don't think that should be ever detracted from. So...

STEVE AUSTIN:

Prior to the state election, you said you were going to save \$7 billion in four years from cutting back use of consultants. The State Government spends \$50 million a year on them, so \$50 million over four years is \$200 million. How are you going to save \$7 billion?

TREASURER:

That's an old Cameron Dick talking point, Steve, that's not right. We know the Auditor-General has made clear that spending....

STEVE AUSTIN:

But you guys did say you were going to save that money through not using consultants.

TREASURER:

Yep. Absolutely. And we're working on that. We've started the Queensland Government, work on the Queensland Government Consulting, which we'll be standing up, because that is important, because we're absolutely focused on empowering the public service to deliver the services we need. We're talking right throughout departments as to how we go about saving funds on contractors and consultants. And we know it can be done because Cameron Dick himself, when he was treasurer, launched two, two initiatives to try and save \$3 billion over four years on consultants. He never delivered a single cent of savings. In fact, Auditor-General said they went from \$2 billion to \$3 billion between 18-19 and 22-23. So we are actually committed to this. We're going to stand up Queensland Government Consulting to build that capability and to save that funding and to make sure we're getting the capacity and the skill set and backing in our public servants.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Over two years ago now, your boss, the now Premier of Queensland, David Crisafulli, promised to release a tax policy. To date, he's still not done that. Why not?

TREASURER:

That's not right Steve.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Where is it?

TREASURER:

I was clear right throughout the election campaign and then in the costings, the tax plan was clear. We've retained coal royalties across the forwards.

STEVE AUSTIN:

So that was the policy, retaining them?

TREASURER:

No, no, that's first part of it. I've committed to, I've already instructed Treasury and the Queensland Revenue Office to start work on ensuring that general practitioners operating under a contractor model will not pay payroll tax. So that is in train and that will be delivered

early in the new year. It's already been done administratively, but I'm hoping to legislatively achieve that as well. We've also committed, because we know the housing crisis is real, we've got a generation of young Queenslanders that are giving up hope on ever owning their first home. So we've committed to not have first home buyers purchasing a new home, paying any stamp duty. We've committed to that. So our tax plan has been targeted. It's been targeted to give generation of young people hope to get back into the housing market because Queensland, we've got the lowest home ownership rate at 63.5 per cent. We want younger people being able to purchase their home, and we want the sick and the vulnerable to be able to go and see a general practitioner. And instead, the former government was more focused on driving down bulk billing rates and pushing up the cost of seeing a doctor and more people into overcrowded emergency departments, where our tax plan has been quite targeted in delivering great outcomes for Queenslanders.

STEVE AUSTIN:

David Crisafulli promised to cut taxes and lower debt. Will you still be able to do that? Given what Treasury's briefing document to you says.

TREASURER:

Steve, we committed to have a lower debt burden than what Labor was promising, and I think it's quite clear already that we'll be delivering that. But there is still more work to do. Now I have, obviously...

STEVE AUSTIN:

So you'll still cut taxes and lower debt?

TREASURER:

Well, Steve, I've made clear our tax plan in relation to the payroll tax on general practitioners, which will make it more affordable for Queenslanders to see a doctor in the first home buyers stamp duty concession for new builds.

STEVE AUSTIN:

We heard from Jack Mackay this morning that you're receiving more money from land taxes. Are you going to look at that and reduce them at all?

TREASURER:

Steve, that's not on the agenda right now. But what I am focused on is delivering that relief for people going to see the doctor and for first home buyers. I think... what we, what you need to know too is I've listed the blowouts that we've just discovered in the last month that all of that.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Yep.

TREASURER:

And while we are continuing to do the work that's necessary, we are... I've decided to push back MYEFR to the new year. So that will be later in January. Normally it's the middle of December. So we're continuing to do that work in relation to all the project overruns and cost blowouts across all line ministries. And if you'll have me, I'll be back in January to talk you through them, too.

STEVE AUSTIN:

I'm not going to let you go yet. I've got some more questions to ask you about pre and post-election commitments. This is 612 ABC Brisbane. My guest is the man who says he is walking a tightrope, Queensland's new Treasurer David Janetzki. He's speaking at a business function today. I'll pick up the conversation with the Treasurer Janetzki in just a moment.

[TRAFFIC REPORT]

STEVE AUSTIN:

My guest is Queensland's new treasurer, David Janetzki. Are you still going to have to borrow money to pay operating expenses in Queensland? This is borrowing money just to pay wages, let alone doing anything productive.

TREASURER:

Yeah. Steve, so in our costings before the election and in the budget that the former government released in June 24, we have coming back to operating surplus in 26-27. So there will be a period of time where there will be an operating deficit. However...

STEVE AUSTIN:

So the answer is yes?

TREASURER:

Yes. But our plan is clear to get that back into surplus in 26-27. And what we've seen in our first month is those cost blowouts and project overruns will burden Queenslanders for the long term. Now, ideally, you know, running a fiscal deficit to build infrastructure for a growing population, that, that's acceptable, right. People expect governments to do that. We've got a lot of population growth and a lot of infrastructure development that's necessary. Operating balance deficits, they're not ideal. We know that. So that's why we're targeting 26-27 to get that back into surplus, as per, in fact, I think the former government had that position as well. But that's certainly our position. And unlike them, where we're likely to reach it.

STEVE AUSTIN:

You've said that you'll pursue a fiscal surplus. Is that still the case? Still the plan?

TREASURER:

Look, the expectation is, you know, operating balance, we've got a target a surplus there because, as you've said, you know, you don't want to be borrowing long term to keep the lights on. That's not how household budgets do it. No household wants to be borrowing money to pay the bills and to buy groceries. So governments are no different and they should

be no different. So that's on an operating side. On a fiscal side, absolutely. If we need to borrow to build the infrastructure a growing population needs, then we will do so. But as always, it has to be responsible. And the former government proved time and time again that every announcement they made about a capital project, it was without substance. It would announce policies without a process. So we are quite diligent. And in fact, there's a story today on Borumba Pumped Hydro, which is a perfect example of them again announcing something without having done the work. We will do the work and make announcements when there is substance to them.

STEVE AUSTIN:

The story in the Australian seems to indicate that you've told the pumped hydro team to downgrade it or reduce the size or the impact of that. Is that correct?

TREASURER:

So yeah, the story today, we've, it's another blowout we've discovered. So it was a report that was commissioned by the former government. Previously Borumba Pumped Hydro was \$14 billion. We've now learned it's going to be \$18 billion. And in fact, an independent consultant thinks it could even be north of \$19 billion. And in the report there it actually said that the former government had a less than 1 per cent chance of actually delivering this project in the time frame it claimed. So it was a 1 per cent, less than a 1 per cent play by the former government. Now, what is telling in relation to Borumba and that report, it actually says in there that there are other smaller, manageable options available to be explored. So I've got a meeting with Queensland Hydro on tomorrow and we're going to start exploring those smaller options. Because look, some of these projects that have blown out, Steve, we need to find a way to deliver them because they are important to Queensland. They are important...

STEVE AUSTIN:

Because if you don't build these pumped hydro projects, we'll run out of electricity?

TREASURER:

For a whole variety of reasons, yes. And we want to keep, moving forward on emissions targets, on renewables, on those investments over the long term. So for a variety of reasons, these projects need to be, we need to find a way to deliver them because Queenslanders deserve it. But unlike the former government, when we, when we make an announcement, it will be backed by substance and we'll continue to do that work.

STEVE AUSTIN:

My guest is Queensland's new treasurer, David Janetzki. This is 612 ABC Brisbane. It's eight minutes to nine. I'm going to keep you a little bit longer if this is all right.

TREASURER:

Absolutely.

STEVE AUSTIN:

The previous government caused a great deal of waves, if not friction, in the mining and resources industry in Australia and wider afield when they brought in their apparently unconsulted increase in coal royalties, but it gave them a whole lot more cash. Is it correct that the peak of the royalties coming into the coffers of Queensland Treasury is now declining? In other words, the peak is over and now Treasury... well, what does Treasury say about future coal royalties from the royalties regime in the state?

TREASURER:

So, Steve, there's a number of comments I'd make about this. So in addition to those project overruns and capital blowouts, which I've discussed this morning, we are seeing weakening revenues and amongst them, weakening coal royalties. And there's a variety of reasons across a global market why that is the case. However, what the former government did do was diminish the pipeline of economic activity that's coming down the track. And one of the things we've said is we want to provide regulatory certainty and stability, and if word is given, it is kept. And we've actually got right now our Finance Minister, Ros Bates, her first trip abroad is to Japan and Korea, key trading partners of ours. She's over there right now having those discussions, rebuilding that confidence. Because at the end of the day, we need that pipeline of investment and we need capital. And that's something else I'll be saying today at the Australian British Chamber of Commerce lunch that, you know, we're a trading state. Our prosperity is dependent on good trading relations with people that rely on us, and we need to respect them and not treat them with contempt.

STEVE AUSTIN:

The Australian newspaper reported previously that the public servants wage bill in Queensland had risen by 75 per cent in nine years. This is partly because Labor abandoned their previous fiscal principle under then treasurer Curtis Pitt, of capping public servant growth to less than the rate of population growth. Will you restore that fiscal principle that Labor abandoned?

TREASURER:

Yes. So that fiscal principle you mentioned there, Steve, that's two iterations ago.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Yes. Two treasurers ago.

TREASURER:

Yes, Could be three even.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Three. Sorry.

TREASURER:

I, so look, right now I'm the fiscal principles that I'm looking at are the former governments, except I'm keen to try and meet them unlike they had abandoned them. Look, Steve, there's a

lot of work for me to go through, obviously, to get to MYEFR now in January, as we work through, line by line through the project overruns. And...

STEVE AUSTIN:

So you don't know yet basically?

TREASURER:

Right now I'm going to continue that work. We've got our budget that'll be in June. If there's any revisions to fiscal principles, I'll be bringing them forward then. But look, again, I just need to make clear, like, we need an empowered public service. We need more police, nurses, teachers, firies. So there is a vital role for public service to play in us as a government being able to deliver more and better services.

STEVE AUSTIN:

So you'll be delivering a Mid-Year Financial and Economic Review late next month in the new year. How are you going to... so if what Treasury has told you is correct that our debt situation quote, won't... sorry, a significant and growing debt burden that won't stabilise quote unquote the Treasury briefing. How are you going to do it? I mean, that's to say that it won't stabilise. It's your job to make it stabilise. How can you make it stabilise without cutting back on the massive public service size or wages bill that Queensland has?

TREASURER:

Well, calmly and methodically, Steve, that's how we go about it. That's how we've gone about our first month in government, whether it be pausing BPIC or making a clear headed decision on Pioneer-Burdekin, and how that would put the state's balance sheet at risk over the long term. Let me use the example of Borumba today again. So that project now gone from \$14 billion to \$18 billion. We know that project can be delivered on a smaller scale, more manageably. So I'm going to continue to do the works on those kinds of projects to make sure we can get them delivered, and in the meantime, every line minister is going through their departments and their projects very calmly and methodically. Like I said, we've made two early announcements in respect of BPIC and Pioneer-Burdekin, and we're going to keep doing the work. I'll have more to say in January at MYEFR and how we're going to be progressing. And then obviously the budget process will take us through to middle of next year.

STEVE AUSTIN:

The previous state government's budget was described at the time by the Australian Financial Review as a populist clown show, quote unquote. And your government now supported it. Aren't you locked into a populist clown show budget?

TREASURER:

Oh, Steve, I reject that.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Well, over the four years you've locked yourself into keeping to it.

TREASURER:

Well, Steve, we've made clear the distinction between us and the former government. You know, those promises that were made before the election that I've listed. All the state owned servos, general practitioners, lunch delivery, another energy retailer. The billions and billions of dollars that they would have baked into the forward. Then you've got our...

STEVE AUSTIN:

So you don't have to meet that now because they weren't elected basically?

TREASURER:

I... absolutely. And we've made those early decisions and we're going to keep calmly and methodically going through the budget. Look, I said before the election, I would have said it to you, Steve, I wanted to return a mature and calm discussion to what drives our prosperity and underpins our budget. I believe we've done that in the first month, and that's my intention and the way I intend to continue.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Good luck for the Mid-Year Economic Review in January. Thanks for coming in.

TREASURER:

Thanks, Steve.

STEVE AUSTIN:

David Janetzki is Queensland's new Treasurer.

[ENDS]

Station: 4BC
 Program: Mornings
 Compere: Bill McDonald
 Interviewee: Treasurer David Janetzki
 Date: 4 December 2024, 9:20am
 Duration: 15mins

E&OE

BILL MCDONALD:

Let's get to the expert in this particular subject. It hasn't been the report card we wanted before Christmas and Queensland is facing its first credit rating downgrade in 15 years. As I said, the warnings have come from new Treasurer David Janetzki, and it would make the state's growing debt burden even more expensive. Mr Janetzki and the LNP have likely inherited a credit rating downgrade after a decade of Labor rule. All is going to be addressed when Mr Janetzki delivers his keynote address this afternoon at around one-thirty. I'm pleased to say the Treasurer joins us now. Good morning.

TREASURER:

Good morning, Bill, how are you?

BILL MCDONALD:

I'm well thanks. No doubt a busy day for you, I imagine. Before you started as treasurer, you were pretty clear about the challenges ahead. The Treasury briefed you and said there was a concerning increase in the interest burden likely to exceed critical thresholds. Did you anticipate it was this bad, though?

TREASURER:

No, I didn't, Steve. Look, I didn't, Bill.

BILL MCDONALD:

That's all right.

TREASURER:

[inaudible] what a great start.

BILL MCDONALD:

That's all right.

TREASURER:

[inaudible], mate.

BILL MCDONALD:

No worries, Fred.

[laughter]

TREASURER:

We're off. Mate, I was concerned. Right. So we had seen through the election campaign a waning fiscal discipline as Standard and Poor's, the credit rating agency, had said. And we'd seen during the election campaign, you know, the \$9 billion of promises that they put out there about state owned service stations and state owned general practices and another state owned energy retailer and state delivered school lunches, we knew that the former government had lost its way. But what I've learned that's most concerned me, Bill, in the last month has been those project blowouts. And every line minister right now is going carefully through their budgets. Because, you know, we've seen just in the first month of the Crisafulli Government, we've seen a blow-out Gold Coast Light Rail, you know, \$330 million more. Cross River Rail \$494 million more. Hospital blowouts that have gone beyond \$1.3 billion. Then you've got CopperString. It was \$6.2, now it's \$9 billion. And of course, the biggest project of all, which is Pioneer-Burdekin, which went from \$12 billion before the election to \$36.8 billion. So, Bill, the magnitude of the project overruns and blowouts has been surprising. And particularly what's been surprising was how deceitful the former government had been in hiding them. And now that we're in government learning of the magnitude of that deceit.

BILL MCDONALD:

That's what I was going to say. That's what I think grinds everybody's gears, that this seems to have been... this is how we got into the mess. Is that correct? And was this hidden? Was it genuinely hidden? And have we been deceived?

TREASURER:

I believe so, you know, and if you take an example of CopperString. So that's the transmission line and a wonderful project for North Queensland. And that's the transmission line, basically a giant power line that runs from Townsville to Mount Isa in time and the former government knew, it knew before the election that it had already gone from \$6.2 billion to \$9 billion, and they never said a thing. So, look, I think Queenslanders have the right to be disappointed, be angry even, because I think...

BILL MCDONALD:

Is there more to it than that? Is it, I feel like this is scandalous, almost to a point where should there be some sort of inquiry? Or should there be some sort of, should the government or particular people in, previous ministry be held to account on a higher level for this?

TREASURER:

Yeah, I do think they've got so many questions to answer. And the thing we've got now is the two former figures at the head of the former government are now the head of the opposition.

So Steven Miles and Cameron Dick, who knew all of this. They knew all of the cost overruns. They knew of the deceit and how it had been hidden. They're still running the opposition. So I don't believe they have any credibility whatsoever in this term of the Crisafulli Government. But nevertheless, they're there. But, you know, I don't think Queenslanders will ever forget, Bill, what they've done [inaudible]

BILL MCDONALD:

Well, should an inquiry be necessary? I mean, these are big numbers we're talking that weren't communicated that they seemingly knew about. Is an inquiry something that genuinely should be on the table?

TREASURER:

Well, look, what I want to do first is prosecute the issues in Parliament and make sure when we get to MYFER. So MYFER is like the half yearly financial report basically. Normally it's done in the middle of December and I've decided we're going to push that back to the middle of January. And by doing so, it just gives us a bit more time. Let's, let's identify all the projects that were announced but were never, had any substance behind them. Let's look at the policies that they announced that had no process. And all the funds that they've announced that had no real funding. Let's get to the end of that process. And, you know, I'll deliver MYFER in the middle of Jan to late Jan and let's get there and see what the damage has been and the degree of deceit.

BILL MCDONALD:

Are you expecting to find more? Are you still in the process and are the top line ministers as you mentioned, are they still in the process of looking under the carpet and under the cushions on the couch, so to speak, to make sure that they have found everything? Is that still an ongoing process?

TREASURER:

It is still an ongoing process. So, you know, as I mentioned, you know, we've got some of those larger scale projects on rail and hospitals and energy projects. You know, there's other projects yet that will have to be examined. And I there will be more project overruns and cost blowouts I expect, in the weeks ahead. And I've certainly instructed Treasury to work closely with every department as we work calmly and methodically through them, because we need to understand the true state of the books. You know, Queenslanders deserve it, and that's what we're going about achieving so that when we deliver our first budget in June next year, the true picture is known. And look, Bill, I think I said to you before the election that I wanted to return a calm and methodical discussion to Queensland about what underpins our prosperity and how we deliver for the future and that's exactly what I want to do.

BILL MCDONALD:

I don't think there's any credence in this, but I'll put it to you that some of some critics are saying, oh, this is the LNP and the new government softening us up for cuts across government departments and for cuts across projects. Your response to that?

TREASURER:

Look, we've ruled out anything in relation to the public service. In fact, we need more nurses and doctors and teachers and police officers. We're in the middle of the crisis of crime, and we need more police officers. The last government, you know, failed to deliver on their police recruit promise by 1147. So we need more public servants on the frontline so that we are in a position to deliver more and better services. You know, and as for capital spend, the Borumba project that was in the news today, that project had gone from \$14 to \$18 billion. The report said the former government, former Labor government, had less than 1 per cent chance of delivering that actual project in the time frame and in the manner it proposed. So it was literally a Hail Mary. Now, in that same report, though, it said the project could still be delivered on a smaller and more manageable scale. So they're the kind of conversations we need to go and have. We need to find a way to save a project like Borumba that can work because Queenslanders deserve these large scale projects, but they need to be delivered in the way in which they've been promised.

BILL MCDONALD:

I was going to ask you, so does this mean there'll be not so much people but cuts to programs? Will you have to try and give some programs a haircut? We've already seen flu jabs might not continue. The free kindy, is that on the chopping block? Have you got to find bits and pieces in other smaller areas?

TREASURER:

Look, Bill, before the election, you know... look, let me put it this way. I... so we've been in government one month and by my count, we've saved the Queensland taxpayer \$54 billion just in pausing BPIC and in not progressing Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro. So that's a pretty good first month...

BILL MCDONALD:

Yeah.

TREASURER:

... I would argue and we wanted to send some clear messages and that we are going to be disciplined. And when a ratings agency like Standard and Poor's tell us that they've got concerns that we will take them seriously. But Cameron Dick and the former government just sort of would ignore them, laugh them off, you know, or just you know, completely dismiss them. We're going to take them seriously. And we need to find the right balance. And that's what we're wanting to do. And that first month where we've saved, you know, \$54 billion, you know, I think that's us sending a good, strong message. But we need those public servants to deliver more and better public services. And, you know, I think a project like Borumba, like I said, if there's a smaller, more manageable option there that needs to be explored.

BILL MCDONALD:

What are the chances of losing the credit rating and what are the consequences the if you put it in simple terms for people listening, if we lose and have a downgrade in the credit rating from triple to double AA?

TREASURER:

Yeah, Bill, I liken a credit rating, which is, you know, full of jargon, but a credit rating is like a family, a mum and dad or a young person going to the bank to get a home loan and the bank assesses them. You know, what are your expenses, what's your revenue, you know, can you manage to a budget? All those questions that are being asked and then the bank goes, well we'll give you the loan but because you're a bit riskier, you can't save as well as what you ought to, then the interest rate will be a bit higher, or the term won't be quite as long as what you want. That's exactly the same signal that credit ratings give to a state like Queensland. You know, it is, investors watch credit ratings. So people that have our bonds that lend us money, they watch our economic performance and our credit rating is a signal to them. So it feeds through to debt markets. It feeds through to the cost of borrowing for the state of Queensland. And that is why, you know, good fiscal responsibility is so important because over the long term, if that credit rating deteriorates, then we pay more for our interest, which means Queenslanders ultimately pay more.

BILL MCDONALD:

When do you find out on the credit rating?

TREASURER:

So it's going to be a, it's a continuing process. So my first official meeting after I started getting that initial Treasury briefing which had said, you know, there was a heightened risk of a downgrade and there was a debt burden that wasn't stabilising, after I got that early advice, I asked at my first meeting be with Standard and Poor's. So Standard and Poor's, we've had that discussion. I expect after MYFER potentially they will come and have another look under the bonnet after we've gone through the process over the next couple of months of working out exactly all those project overruns and blow outs. And then I expect again, they'll come and have a look under the bonnet after the budget next year in June. So it will be a longer term process with some short term gateways. My fear, though, Bill, is it is highly likely that we'll get an outlook downgrade and ultimately a rating downgrade. We've been left with a massive problem by the former government. And, you know, I think we've taken good early steps, but there is a lot more work to be done.

BILL MCDONALD:

Just finally, you've promised no new or increased taxes, but you'll still keep the pipeline of work that's on the table, including Olympics. And I know you're Energy Minister as well. You've got massive portfolios. Is that possible? How do you do it?

TREASURER:

Well, you know, we've said on tax we're going to retain the coal royalties across the forwards but deliver some tax relief to the sick and the vulnerable through not forcing general practitioners to pay payroll tax if they're operating as a contractor. And we've also said we're going to provide relief to first home buyers on that stamp duty concession if they're purchasing a new home. You know, it, it's... I think the early signs that we've sent in respect of that \$54 billion with the pumped hydro and pausing BPIC, you know, I think if we approach this calmly and methodically there is a way through for us. You know, obviously,

like I said, I think we're likely to inherit this outlook downgrade and ultimately a rating downgrade. They've left us a big problem, but we're determined to try and fix it. And we do have an Olympics in 2032. And obviously that review is underway now. The clock is ticking there. And, you know, we've said we want to stick to that \$7.1 billion [inaudible].

BILL MCDONALD:

Is the Gabba back in the frame we're hearing?

TREASURER:

Oh I'll let the experts, I'll let the experts do their work, Bill. But I, you know, I've, I'll watch that closely. I'm very interested in the outcomes, but I think what, you know, we need an Olympic Games of which we can be proud and we've seen....

BILL MCDONALD:

Will you have to sharpen the pencil on whatever's suggested given this position for the Olympics?

TREASURER:

Look, I'll... No, the funding envelope is the funding envelope. That's that \$7.1 billion, which we've committed to. You know, we need an Olympic Games of which we can be proud. I'm happy to let that, that expert panel do their work. And then I look forward to seeing the outcomes and working together to make sure we can deliver the best Olympic Games possible.

BILL MCDONALD:

Let's hope so. Good luck. You're going to need it I think.

TREASURER:

We will. Thanks very much, Bill.

BILL MCDONALD:

Thanks for your time, Treasurer David Janetzki.

[ENDS]

Station: SBS

Program: World News Australia

Compere: Janice Petersen and Carli Willis

Interviewee: Waiben resident Targi Sagigi
Seisia resident Talei Elu
Northern Peninsula Area Mayor Robert Poi Poi
Member for Cook David Kempton

Date: 10 December 2024, 7pm

Duration: 2mins 50sec

E&OE

JANICE PETERSEN:

A group of young people in remote communities on the northernmost tip of Australia are taking the initiative to help others survive lengthy water shortages. A failed water treatment plant caused some households to lose water for almost 24 hours last week, but help is coming, including from across the sea on Thursday Island or Waiben.

CARLI WILLIS:

News of families down to their last water bottle travelled across the Blue Highway to Waiben, Thursday Island.

TARI SAGIGI:

As a mother of six, I started panicking for them and I thought, well, what can I do?

CARLI WILLIS:

The island community rallied to send much needed drinking water to the Seisia community on the mainland.

TARI SAGIGI:

Knowing that our families just across the road is, you know, across that waterway is in need and we can help. Why not?

CARLI WILLIS:

Seisia youth formed a social media chat group to work through frequent service outages together.

TALEI ELU:

You know, getting to 24 hours without water and you really just realise how often you use it, even for, you know, flushing the toilet with a big household. That's a bit of a health and safety issue.

CARLI WILLIS:

Concerned for their elders, they have begun fundraising for portable camp showers.

TALEI ELU:

It just makes it a lot easier for elders or households, especially with young kids, to just have a good bath without massive wastage of, you know, bucket over the head kind of situation.

CARLI WILLIS:

Last week's outage was the longest many residents had experienced.

ROBERT POI POI:

We really need to stress this out to the State Government to take action and help immediately them situations.

CARLI WILLIS:

The outage, caused by two failed water pumps over 60 years old, meant water reached critically low levels. The remote region can see 80,000 tourists visit a year.

ROBERT POI POI:

It should be a bigger water treatment plant that can cater not only for 3800 residents, but for the incoming influx with tourists and all the big events that happen around here.

CARLI WILLIS:

The Local Government Association of Queensland estimates \$645 million is needed to replace ageing infrastructure across the state. The local state MP says he'll assess the situation soon.

DAVID KEMPTON MP:

We can't continue just to patch up ageing infrastructure at immense cost when ultimately it's going to have to be replaced. But I can't commit to anything until I've been, seen, understand and come back and talk to the Department and the Minister.

CARLI WILLIS:

While they wait young people say they'll continue to take action.

[ENDS]

Station: 4BC

Program: Mornings

Compere: Bill McDonald

Interviewee: Premier David Crisafulli

Date: 13 December 2024, 10:21am approx.

Duration: 13mins

E&OE

BILL MCDONALD:

The LNP's new crime laws were passed in State Parliament yesterday. It was a tension filled day, not only for the new government. Labor MP Jonty Bush attacked Steven Miles leadership and, and, of Labor and indicated that she would possibly consider quitting the party. So a dramatic day for the opposition. They're Making Queensland Safer laws were the key pillar, of course, in the LNP's election campaign. But Mr Crisafulli promising they would be delivered by Christmas and he has certainly not matched up and delivered on these. The laws will come into effect on December 20 and ensure young criminals found guilty of certain offences face adult punishments. The Premier David Crisafulli joins us now. Good morning, Premier.

PREMIER:

Bill, good morning to you and your listeners.

BILL MCDONALD:

Thanks for your time. First of all, whereabouts are you this morning? You're still out working?

PREMIER:

I'm in Townsville. I flew out on the first flight. I wanted to come to North Queensland because, you know, the youth crime crisis is impacting all of Queensland. But I can tell you, it's, Townsville is one of the first places that called it out. So I've come here, I've met some of the police officers who are going to be enforcing it. And yeah, it's important that every part of Queensland knows we're serious about this. It's, you're never going to have a perfect situation. You're always going to have an element of crime, but I don't accept that victim numbers have to increase every single year. And this is the first strike back against the youth crime crisis that was started 10 years ago when the former government watered down those laws.

BILL MCDONALD:

It was your key election campaign pillar, as I mentioned. How do you feel now that it's actually passed through Parliament and it's reality?

PREMIER:

Well, Bill, it's a win for the victims who stood up. And Queenslanders were asked to vote for change. And they did. So it's not about me and it's not even about my political movement, it's about Queensland. And it shows that democracy matters. We campaigned heavily on this and... I was a little disappointed to see what unfolded yesterday from the opposition, the way that this was viewed as a political thing. You know, they didn't want to support the laws, but oh, what does it look like? And trade-offs within party rooms. This was never about that. This was about taking a step back and for the first time in 10 years, saying that victims matter, that the rights of the victim should come before the rights of the offender. And that's actually been written into the legislation. So I'd really encourage people to have a look at what the laws do. They really are comprehensive. It's removing detention as a last resort. It's Adult Crime, Adult Time for those strong, those 13 tough offences. It's making sure that the rights of the victim count for something. And then we're going to do early intervention like we've never seen it before. And rehabilitation when a young person leaves jail. And as I said before and I'll say it again, this is the first change. There will be others. And I've promised the Morcombes that the first cab off the rank next year will be a child sex offender register. That's a commitment I made to them. Now there's a bit of work to go on that, but there will need to be further changes to these laws. And I just, you know, want to let Queenslanders know this isn't a set and forget for me. We're going to keep doing this. I'm determined to get the best youth justice system in the country, and we're going to continue to work on it. And despite what we saw from the other side, I want Queenslanders to know they voted for change and they're going to get it.

BILL MCDONALD:

Will the government need to do anything more to address short term pressures on the state's watch houses and prisons as a result?

PREMIER:

Yeah, it's a good question, Bill. It is going to test us, there's no doubt about it. But I just wasn't prepared to go to Christmas with the same *Youth Justice Act* that's tearing the heart and soul out of communities. So you're right, there's going to be pressure. The best time to have been building extra facilities was five years ago, when the watch house crisis was first raised. And the former government did say they were going to do it, they didn't. So look, we've got a few things in place. We're going to make sure that some of the temporary facilities, like what we've seen at Caboolture, that can be expanded and continued. That's important. We're developing what we call the circuit breaker sentencing, and that's a rural sentencing where kids will be sent out, bush, out west and make sure that they get the discipline and the structure in their life. So that's, that'll be unfolding as well. We've got the, an expansion for one of our youth justice systems, which unfortunately is well overdue. But the new minister is doing all she can to try and bring that forward. But there's no doubt it is going to test the systems in place. But the flip side is another Christmas of chaos, and I just wasn't prepared to do that. So we're going to do all we can in the short to medium and the

long term. But we are fulfilling what we said. I said to people that Adult Crime, Adult Time would be law by Christmas. I was told during the election campaign it wouldn't be possible. You couldn't have it done. Well, we did, and we did exactly what we said we were going to do. And I hope Queenslanders are seeing that we're doing that across the board. We said we'd call time on that ridiculous pumped hydro project, the Pioneer-Burdekin, which we were told was \$12 billion. Turns out it was \$37 billion. We said to Queenslanders we'd deal with the militant CFMEU. Well, we've paused BPIC. Everything we said to Queenslanders we were going to do before the election we have done and there's more to come. I've got 100 day plan. We are ticking off every one of them. Not some of them, not most of them, every single one of them. And that matters to me. If you say you're going to do something, you do it.

BILL MCDONALD:

Are you confident it'll still lead to fewer victims? The laws?

PREMIER:

Yes, Bill. Yes, I am, Bill. And that's ultimately the barometer. And there's been increased victim numbers every, year for the last 10 years. And success is lowering that. There has to be fewer victims. And that starts today. And I can actually give you a little bit of an exclusive, Bill. You mentioned in your intro about it coming into effect, it was due to come into effect on the 20th, but the Governor has actually just given it royal assent this morning which I'm really grateful for that. Which means, this from this weekend if, you know, for example, under the current laws, we've seen offenders who have murdered someone walk out in six years. Well, under, from this weekend, if someone is found guilty of murdering someone, they get a minimum mandatory life in prison. And, you know, there's got to be consequences for actions. So we have taken the first strike back in a generation.

BILL MCDONALD:

Wow. Is word getting around? Do you have any anecdotal proof that word's getting around that there's tougher penalties now for young offenders?

PREMIER:

Indeed, the Minister was visiting a youth detention centre the other day, and that was the feedback from some of the, from some of the staff that they know. And look, the truth is they know a lot more about the laws than what you might think, and they know their way around it. And they know that 10 years ago, when it was weakened, that it tipped the balance of power in their favour. They know that. And you want the best proof of that. The correlation is once someone turns 18, the offending rate across many of these categories falls. Well, why does it fall? Well, they understand that the consequence is more severe. And like I said, I'm not suggesting for one moment you're not going to see crime. And you will, of course, but there has to be fewer victims and there has to be consequences, particularly for those really serious crimes. And, you know, I just think it's... it is an historic day for the state because it's the day where victims get what they bravely called for. And I, yesterday at Parliament, before the laws passed, I had many of those Queenslanders who stood up with us over the years, people like Victor White, whose wife, late wife Vyleen, died at Redbank Plains. To see the bravery of someone like that, of Angus Beaumont's family, Michelle Liddle was there

yesterday, but there was a whole heap of these people. They're just they're great Queenslanders and they called for change. And that takes a lot of ticker. But they drove that. And I'm really, really proud to call them friends.

BILL MCDONALD:

Does what happened yesterday on the opposition side of thing and the ruckus that happened behind closed doors that does that show that there's some doubts and question marks over Steven Miles leadership?

PREMIER:

Oh, look, others can comment about that. I've never seen anything like that in my time in the building. We heard of some of the clashes, but in the end we're the government, Bill, and Queenslanders voted for change and they've got a grown up government. And above all, we do have a sense of discipline and purpose, which is what people want to see in their government. And I'd rather focus on us than them. They can justify their behaviour. We're doing what we said we were going to do, and I want Queenslanders to know that will continue into the long term.

BILL MCDONALD:

Your federal counterparts this morning announced a nuclear costings, \$263 billion, it's estimated, cheaper than what's on the table from Anthony Albanese and Labor at the moment. Will that force you to rethink your position on nuclear energy?

PREMIER:

Well it'll be a key part of the federal election. But I go back to me doing what I said I was going to do. So what's my commitment on energy? I've said that we are going to implement a maintenance guarantee on those power plants. We've done that. The Treasurer and the Finance Minister as shareholding ministers have already given that direction. So that means no more bonuses if things aren't working. No more milking these assets. We are going to get them running again. Now that was my commitment. My commitment was to make sure, we've got the youngest coal fired power fleet in the nation, and it hasn't been working because they starved it of maintenance, so it hasn't been working to capacity. So my promise to Queenslanders is I was going to get those coal fired power stations back up and running and driving down your electricity bill. So I'm fulfilling that. Now, we've got a longer term energy plan and we'll continue to work on that. Canberra can have the debate. That's fine. I'm doing what I said we were going to do.

BILL MCDONALD:

All right. On another topic, do we need a new Police Minister with two really negative cultural reports coming out that he's been involved with, and also the \$240,000 fiasco with the new cop shop. Is it time to look at that position?

PREMIER:

Well, you're obviously referring to the Commissioner...

BILL MCDONALD:

Police Commissioner Steve Gollschewski.

PREMIER:

... Minister. Yeah, well, see, the way I'd like to point to is the fact that you've got a new minister. And the former government had the same minister the entire time, and I'm not convinced that he was doing the job that he should have been. So you've got a new minister to help drive that. And, you know, I've, I'm committed to making sure that police have the laws to do their job. And in the end, it's our job to make sure that we give them the resources and the laws and then the Commissioner's job to make sure that those police come to work and feel fulfilled and can do the work that they do. So, you know, we've only been in office for a little over a month. We've worked very, very well with the Commissioner. He's been willing to drive the change that we want to see. My focus is not on the one person that wears the blue uniform, but the more than 10,000 people who do. And the attrition rate at the moment in the Queensland Police is at 6 per cent. Now, I've never seen it that high. And what that means is, despite the pipeline that's come through, the growth in actual police has been next to nothing. And we've shown those figures. And despite the youth crime crisis being out of control, despite the state's population increasing, the number of police has barely moved despite that pipeline of recruits. We've got to retain them. We've got to retain those people and then attract the best and brightest and the new...

BILL MCDONALD:

It's hard when the culture reviews come back very negative though.

PREMIER:

Yeah, but governments also are involved in setting culture. So I'm determined to make sure that people get what they want. And the Commissioner has got a job to do like everyone else. So let's get on and do it.

BILL MCDONALD:

All right. Before we let you go, have you got a Christmas message for everybody? You've had a big year. It's been a big year for the government.

PREMIER:

Yeah. My message is twofold. If you get a chance to have a break, do it safely and do it with your loved ones. I guess the other message is for those who don't get a break, and I refer to many of the people in the public service; the police, the firies, the ambos, the nurses, the people who'll have to respond to disaster. Those people who keep our power on. They don't get a break and we're really grateful for the work they do. But equally, the person who's behind the counter when you go to fuel up on Christmas Day, they're working so you can enjoy time with family. So just one of gratitude for people who do that. We live in a really, really good state. I'm really grateful for people for voting for change and looking forward to spending a couple of weeks with my family, and I hope people get the chance to do the same with theirs.

BILL MCDONALD:

Well, we appreciate your time. Congratulations on a big year and getting those laws through early, as you said, from this weekend and Merry Christmas to you and yours.

PREMIER:

Thank you very much, Bill. And to you, mate. All the best.

BILL MCDONALD:

The Premier David Crisafulli, joining us on mornings for the last time, I'd say before Santa arrives.

[ENDS]

Released under RTI - DPC

Station: Channel 7
 Program: Sunrise
 Compere: Monique Wright
 Interviewee: Premier David Crisafulli
 Date: 16 December 2024, 7:17am
 Duration: 3mins 25sec

E&OE

MONIQUE WRIGHT:

Well Queensland's popular police wandering laws are set to become permanent after the new government announced their inclusion in next year's Making Queensland Safer laws. Known as Jack's Law, the legislation was named in honour of Queensland teenager Jack Beasley, who was fatally stabbed on the Gold Coast in 2019 while on a night out with friends. Joining us now is the Queensland Premier David Crisafulli. Morning to you. Thanks so much for being with us, Premier. Now Jack's parents, Brett and Belinda Beasley, I know you were with them yesterday, have worked so hard on this. What an incredible legacy they're leaving for their Jack.

PREMIER:

They are two of the most amazing Queenslanders you'll ever meet. And through their tragedy, they drove change. And we fought really, hard for this. And to have Jack's Law, which gives police the ability to wander in those areas, that's taken over a thousand weapons off the streets in Queensland alone. So to have that become permanent, in stone forever in legislation, that's just such a remarkable legacy for two of the greatest Queenslanders you'll ever meet.

MONIQUE WRIGHT:

Look, we've seen a number of states and territories roll out Jack's Law or similar rules. However, yet to see it in Victoria, where we know that knife crime is a really big problem. What's your message to the Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan?

PREMIER:

Mon, I don't give advice to other premiers, but I'll make this observation. It has been a resounding success in Queensland. It really has. And the message that they've also done in going into the schools and telling young people about the dangers of carrying a knife, the police presence, the visibility, the removal of those weapons. It's been one of the best things that we've done as a state, and I just can't stress enough how important it is. And coupled with the Adult Crime, Adult Time laws that we just passed through the Parliament in the last few days, it's all about sending a message that there are consequences for actions. So you get that

bit of the framework, right, and then you deal with the early intervention. Then you deal with the rehabilitation when a young person leaves jail. But it's got to be throughout the system. But there is just no reason for a young person to carry a weapon and go into a nightclub precinct. That's just crazy.

MONIQUE WRIGHT:

Okay, I want to ask you, just brought up there the Adult Crime, Adult Time laws that have just been introduced right there in Queensland. Pretty much every expert that we have interviewed in this field says that crime rates might go down in the short term, but longer term, it will be an absolute disaster for the community and also cost to the taxpayer, because these criminals are going to learn how to commit worse crime.

PREMIER:

Well, we don't share that view. And with respect, that's been the same advice that the former government took for the last 10 years after they weakened the laws and crime rates have increased every single year after that. Now, I believe that sending a message works and that shows in the figures. So when a when an offender turns 18, the rate of offending falls because the punishment is more severe. So you've got to have consequences for actions.

MONIQUE WRIGHT:

Okay.

PREMIER:

On the other end of the scale, and I mentioned it before, you've got to do early intervention. And we're going to do that in Queensland like we've never seen before.

MONIQUE WRIGHT:

All right. Thanks so much, Premier. We really appreciate your time.

PREMIER:

Thanks, Mon.

[ENDS]

Station: Channel 9
 Program: Today
 Compere: Sam Amrytage
 Interviewee: Premier David Crisafulli
 Date: 16 December 2024, 7:23am
 Duration: 5mins 25sec

E&OE

SAM ARMYTAGE:

Jack's Law will become permanent in Queensland, a move to give police more powers to crack down on knives in public. To discuss, we are joined now by Queensland Premier David Crisafulli live from Brisbane. Premier, good morning. Jack's Law has been a long time coming. So much knife crime around on our streets. Why is this the right move for Queensland?

PREMIER:

Good morning, Sam. It's the right move because it sends a message to young people that they just shouldn't be carrying them. And in the short period of time since we fought to get those laws in place, police have detected over a thousand weapons on the streets of Queensland. That's huge. That's a thousand weapons that could have been used to change a life. And what Brett and Belinda Beasley have done through their tragedy is they have driven change. They have been the face and the voice of driving change. And we want to make sure that law is embedded in stone permanently, forever. And that will be the case. So as part of the second round of our Making Queensland Safer laws, the first round did the Adult Crime, Adult Time. This will make sure that Jack's law becomes permanent in law in Queensland.

SAM ARMYTAGE:

And of course, Jack Beasley was fatally stabbed in 2019. Now this Adult Crime, Adult Time laws have now passed. Do you think this will be enough, Premier, to deter young offenders?

PREMIER:

It's the first step, Sam. And I've said if more is required, more will be given. So the next wave of changes makes Jack's Law permanent. It also fulfils a commitment I made to the Morcombes to create a child sex offender register, which will be known as Daniel's Law in honour of Daniel Morcombe. So if further changes are needed, they will be delivered. So my view is you've got to have consequences for actions and I'm determined to make sure that we do have the best laws dealing with youth crime in the country. But we are also going to do early intervention in this state like we've never seen before. We are going to do rehabilitation when a young person is inside prison and when they leave. What's happened in Queensland a

decade ago, the former government weakened the laws and it just created a generation of repeat hardcore offenders. And as a result, victim numbers have increased in Queensland every single year for the last 10 years. We are addressing the problem at all ends of the spectrum and my commitment to Queenslanders is fewer victims. That's what we promised before the election, and we are implementing everything we said we were going to do.

SAM ARMYTAGE:

There's obviously a youth crime issue in Queensland, but what do you say to people who believe these laws ignore the chance for young offenders to turn their lives around?

PREMIER:

Well, that's why I always speak about early intervention and getting in early. That's why I speak about rehabilitation. We've spoken about fixing the residential care sector, which says over 2000 kids in state care in Queensland, and they just don't have the hope and the love and the structure and the discipline to turn their life around. We're going to get serious about Child Safety, to try and intervene with those vulnerable Queenslanders. So I've spoken about it all the way through the system. But with respect to those voices who are saying that, it's the same voices that have spoken about weakening the laws for the last decade, and we are in the mess we are because the former government took that approach. Now it's a sad day when in Queensland, when it's newsworthy for a politician to do what they say they were going to do. But we are fulfilling exactly what we said before the election. We are honouring that commitment with Queenslanders. And my commitment to every Queenslanders is it won't just be one sector of that youth crime crisis we're dealing with, it's everything. It's early intervention. It's those systems of government. It's consequences for actions. One thing's for certain, though, we are not going to remain the victim capital of this country. And that's my commitment to Queensland.

SAM ARMYTAGE:

Yes, we like it when politicians do what they say they're going to do, Premier. Just before we let you go, our top story today is the Bali Nine back on home turf in Australia. Some of these men are from Queensland. Would you be happy to see them resettled in Queensland?

PREMIER:

Well Sam, I guess the... regardless of how people see the decision, what I would like to see come from this is a generation who may never have heard about this case, to be reminded about the consequences of bringing drugs into the country and going to other nations. And make no mistake, there's, there has to be a message to people that there is huge risks involved with that. And there'll be a whole heap of young Australians who who've never heard of the case or have only heard of it in passing. I have a zero tolerance approach when it comes to drugs, and I've spoken about that quite a bit. And if highlighting this can remind people about the dangers of going overseas and trying to bring drugs back into the mainland, well, perhaps this decision will shine a light on that, and maybe in that small way, prevent somebody going over and doing something very, very silly.

SAM ARMYTAGE:

Have you heard anything, just quickly, from federal authorities about where these men will return to once they leave Darwin?

PREMIER:

No we haven't. I was just listening, I was just listening to the Bishop's comments before I came on air. And he's right, the integration process is going to be really, tough for them. Make no mistake about that. A decision has been taken. We have to do all we can to make sure that integration occurs as best as it can. And I'm sure that's something that every Australian will agree with.

SAM ARMYTAGE:

Okay. Premier David Crisafulli, thanks for your time today.

[ENDS]

Released under RTI - DPC

Station: 4BC
 Program: Mornings
 Compere: Bill McDonald
 Interviewee: Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie
 Date: 18 December 2024, 9:37am
 Duration: 13mins

E&OE

BILL MCDONALD:

It's been a very busy start, hasn't it, to the tenure for the LNP state government, the new government. The BPIC was paused last month, the, well we call it the CFMEU tax as you know. Government departments have pulled construction tenders and have sent them back to the market and basically gone, sharpen your pencil, see what you can do for, for the state and for the, all the people that voted for a change of government. Queensland Health pulled the contract for the \$530 million rebuild of Townsville Hospital after it blew out to \$1 billion. It's understood the Department of Transport and Main Roads may consider doing the same thing with some of their tenders. Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie joins me now. Good morning. Nice to speak with you again.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Good morning, Bill, and good morning to all your listeners.

BILL MCDONALD:

Look, how successful is this rolling back of BPIC so far, and is it going to be? It seems you, you know, you're making genuine inroads with this or hope to?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, everyone knows that BPIC aka the CFMEU tax, and it was just costing Queenslanders, I was going to say hundreds of millions of dollars, but literally billions of dollars in a CFMEU tax orchestrated by the former Labor government. So first thing we wanted to do is suspend BPIC from projects going forward. But then we quickly realised there are so many projects out there, like the Townsville University Hospital expansion, which was not contracted, no contracts had been entered into. It was all sort of pre-work, including the Olympic and Paralympic three venues, in the minor venues and everyone was telling us councils, builders, construction subbies that with BPIC applicable to these projects going forward, they will be unaffordable. So we're actually saving projects. So Townsville University Hospital expansion will happen, but we've got to reduce the cost and we will do that with BPIC. So we've gone back to market and I suspect that without the CFMEU tax, it's

going to be a lot easier for government to get on with the job and build these projects and infrastructure that Queensland so desperately needs.

BILL MCDONALD:

Do you have any idea, or can you tell us what sort of idea of what number of projects you might be talking about here in terms of, and what savings you'd hope to get? We obviously, we hear about 30 per cent being the number that goes on top with BPIC. Is it something in that sort of vicinity on each project?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

It is, Bill. It's about 30 per cent cost increase.

BILL MCDONALD:

That's big isn't it?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

And I note... oh, it's a huge, it's a huge increase. And they kept, kept encroaching in more sectors. And then the CFMEU were trying to get into the civil sector and the civil space which, they won't be able to do now because we've suspended BPIC. But you look in my portfolio with the three minor venues that I announced, the Sunshine Coast for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, Sunshine Coast Indoor Centre, Sunshine Goes Outdoor stadium and the Chandler Sports Precinct. They had blown out by \$181 million. And, for instance, the Sunshine Coast Council were telling me out of those two projects, with the blowouts of nearly \$100 million, a lot of it was attributable to the CFMEU tax. So they hadn't been contracted, they hadn't been tendered, and that's why now it's part of the 100 day review. So I suspect that, you know, in all our portfolios and we've asked all our ministers, we have to respect Queensland taxpayers money. And this is not about the projects not continuing. This is actually about the LNP government saving these projects because it would have... I think everyone would understand that if you've got billions and billions of dollars of these blowouts, at some point it's unachievable to deliver them. So it's about saving these projects and saving, for instance, the Townsville University Hospital expansion. That's why we've gone back to market. And I suspect we'll get better deals for Queensland taxpayers and deliver the project.

BILL MCDONALD:

So does this mean anyone connected with CFMEU in terms of union workers won't be involved in some of these projects moving forward? Or can they still do it but won't have the BPIC cream on the top?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

No. Absolutely. We want competition. Anyone can be involved and I suspect there'll be, without BPIC and the CFMEU tax, Bill, I suspect there will be a great spotlight on Queensland. Queensland under an LNP government is open for business. We'll have more businesses wanting to do deals in Queensland, wanting to build construction in Queensland, and that's great because of the infrastructure pipeline we're going to need right through to

2032. So I suspect there'll be, bearing in mind no other jurisdiction in Australia has the BPIC provisions. The CFMEU tax. It was just it was a CFMEU tax designed by the CFMEU for the Labor government of the day and the Labor government hand in hand orchestrated it with the CFMEU. Well, that dodgy deal is now gone. It's a new government, it's a fresh start and a fresh start for Queensland construction sites and the construction industry. So, you know, even the big players are saying it's great. And look at a couple of days ago, the Cross River Rail contractors did a new EB agreement without BPIC. So, and the world didn't come, the world didn't come crashing down like the Labor Party said it was going to do. So EBA's can be negotiated with the CFMEU without BPIC, and the world moves on and it doesn't come down to a crashing halt like the Labor Party said it was going to do once we suspended BPIC.

BILL MCDONALD:

I think it's music to everybody's ears that wanted to see that happen. I think we all knew it had to be dismantled. Closing in on Christmas, apart from that, how are things progressing with the 2024... well, so far on your list of 100 things to do? Are you're getting there?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Oh well look, absolutely. We've, in my portfolio, we set up the 100 day review. We've set up an independent infrastructure coordination authority to deliver to the 2032 Games and the infrastructure required. The Labor Party, you know, before the election, couldn't even set up a board, couldn't even get seven people to do, to serve on the board. We've done that. We've, within the 100 days, instructed Queensland Health to start publishing the health data. So, mate, it's been great. And I hope that we've shown that, you know, we are steady, calm and certain government. But we will put Queensland interests first. We will respect people's money. We had the Adult Crime, Adult Time Making Queensland Safer laws passed the parliament. David Crisafulli, our Premier said if you vote for the LNP, we're going to introduce the Making Queensland Safer laws and have them passed and be laws by Christmas. We've done that. We suspended BPIC. We've introduced legislation to set up the Productivity Commission. The housing, Housing Task Force subcommittee of cabinet ministers, which I chair, has been established. We're unlocking church and charity based land to build more homes in Queensland. So I hope we've shown Queenslanders that since the 26th of October they've got an LNP government now. It's a mature government. We're getting on with the job and we're doing exactly what we said we were going to do.

BILL MCDONALD:

Yeah, I think a little birdie has told me that you've ticked off, well today, after all of these roundtables, will have ticked off everything on the 100 day to do list for 2024. So, well done on that. On, interesting article today. You've contradicted your federal coalition policy on nuclear saying Queensland didn't support it. That was pretty clear position in the lead up to the state election. How is that being received at national coalition level? What's the government's plan in lieu of Mr Dutton's nuclear plan?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, it wouldn't be a surprise to anyone because we had a pretty, we had our plan and our position. And our position was to ensure that our coal fired power stations, which are owned

by Queenslanders at the moment, were, are well maintained. You remember Callide blew up under the former government. So our position was pretty consistent, or very consistent. Part of the plan was for the maintenance guarantee for our current assets. It's about making sure we're putting pressure to reduce power prices for Queenslanders in the short term. You know, this is the stuff we've got to do now. And we took that to the election and that's what we're doing. So our plan hasn't changed and the debate will continue in Canberra. But it wasn't part of our plan. So I don't think it would have come as any surprise to people what our position was.

BILL MCDONALD:

With the Olympic and Paralympic Game review that's underway, will you be... is it a case of, okay, 'there's the seven, off you go, here's the parameters, come back to us in 100 days', or will you be will they be able to come back and refer to you and get instructions? Will you be getting an update along the way?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, I met the board, the seven panel members, the first day they started the 100 day review. And essentially it's an independent board now. So they have to get on with the job. We've given them pretty good terms of reference in terms of, you know, looking at generational infrastructure, road and rail projects that were promised to Queenslanders that weren't ever going to be delivered if the Labor Party had got re-elected. It's about maximising existing venues. It's about sorting, it's essentially sorting the mess out, Bill. Twelve hundred days of lost opportunity for the Olympic and Paralympic Games 2032, and Queensland has nothing to show for it other than an embarrassing plan, which was Steven Miles old QSAC plan that no one supported other than Steven Miles. So it's literally having seven grown ups with corporate and construction and property experience in a room to give advice to the government for the roadmap for the future. And that's what we've tasked them to do. The report will be handed to government in March. So I think the first week in March. We'll release the report and respond to it accordingly. But this is about sorting out the chaos and crisis of the Olympic and Paralympic Games to make sure also that everyone benefits, particularly in regional and rural Queensland, because they have been completely forgotten. Out of the old plans and the old government, regional rural Queensland didn't rate a mention. In fact, they voted against our amendment in Parliament to put a regional representative on the board. The Labor Party voted against it as they did the other night as well, where we have Jamie Fitzpatrick from Townsville on the board representing regional Queensland. So I'm really confident we've got a board that is good for Queensland, is great for Queensland and I understand they're taking submissions at the moment from any Queenslanders. You know, how refreshing that Queenslanders can actually have a say on the infrastructure required for the future, generational road and rail. Not about, it's not about the Olympic and Paralympic Games for those weeks. It's about what happens after, what happens before and how can we get the best value for money in infrastructure that we need across the state, whether it's road, rail, housing, transportation, public transport. And Queenslanders can have a say. So they can actually go to the GIICA, which is the Games Independent Infrastructure Coordination Authority website, and they can submit up until the middle of January.

BILL MCDONALD:

Will you adopt the recommendations and the findings lock, stock and barrel? Even if it involves a new stadium or a refurbished, complete refurbishment of a stadium like the Gabba?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, we've been pretty clear to the board that, yes, they're independent, but they have the terms of reference and they have to be guided by their terms of reference. But we have been asked that before, the Premier and I, and our response to that, Bill has been, look, at the end of the day, it's an independent authority, but it is Queensland taxpayers money. We've asked them to develop a plan within the \$7.1 billion spend, because the Federal Government have also said you can't, they're not, the Federal Government have indicated they're not giving one ounce of any money over it, despite the fact that all these things have blown out under the state, former state and federal government's watch. So, we will get the review but ultimately, the Premier and I and the government are responsible to the people of Queensland. So we have to have a look at the review. We don't know what's in it. We don't know what's going to be in it. And I don't want to entertain that everything's going to be accepted because we just don't know what's in it. And we have to get it and we have to then, you know, talk to Queenslanders and bring Queenslanders on a journey. And Queenslanders can have a say. Gamesreview.com.au. They can get online and put in their submissions and any submissions are going to be accepted.

BILL MCDONALD:

All right. On a lighter note, before we let you go and almost wrapped up for the year, I know you like your music. I know you like Elvis. Is it going to be a blue Christmas in the Bleijie household?

[EXCERPT OF BLUE CHRISTMAS BY ELVIS PRESLEY IS PLAYED]

BILL MCDONALD:

Or given the last weekend, could it be a bit of this style?

[EXCERPT OF GANGNAM STYLE BY PSY IS PLAYED]

BILL MCDONALD:

Well, you're pretty, you're pretty snazzy on the stage. Was it last week at Christmas, a function up on the Sunshine Coast? What's it going to be?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Mate, Bill, I'm telling you, Elvis is always in my house whenever I'm home. So the kids are, the kids are really looking forward to me having a few days off and just playing concert Elvis. However, in saying that, the Gangnam Style that I danced the other night at the local lights, the Currimundi Lights on the Lake my electorate has had about 26,000 views on Facebook, more than my Elvis, so I think I've been doing it wrong all the time. I think I need to do a bit more Gangnam Style. But I am coming up with a tune of my own at the moment.

BILL MCDONALD:

Whoa, okay.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Labor Party 12 Days of Christmas, because we've not seen the Labor Party anywhere publicly for the last seven days. So I am trying to, I am working out my own carol at the moment, which I might release as a single before Christmas Day, about the Labor Party missing in action in Queensland.

BILL MCDONALD:

Well, I liked your wish list on one of the last sitting days of Parliament. That was funny as well, so we'll look out for that one dropping soon. Thank you for your time and have a merry Christmas to you and your family.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

You too, and to all your listeners, mate. Thank you very much. Cheers.

BILL MCDONALD:

The Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie, joining us on Mornings.

[ENDS]

Station: 4BC Brisbane

Program: Breakfast

Speaker/s: Premier David Crisafulli

Airdate: Friday 20 December 2024 8.17am

Duration: 09 minutes 04 seconds

E&OE

PETER FEGAN:

17 and a half after eight, it's been a big year, but none bigger than the Premier of Queensland, elected in October. David Crisafulli has promised a change for Queensland. Now I know I'm obliged to ask David Crisafulli some questions this morning about the state of Queensland and I will, but I also want to get to know David Crisafulli a little better and find out what he does for Christmas. And I'm pleased to say the Premier of Queensland joins me on the line. Premier Happy Friday.

PREMIER:

Peter. Happy Friday and happy Christmas to you and your listeners mate. Beautiful time of year.

PETER FEGAN:

Let's tear the Band-Aid off because I don't want to talk politics all morning, but I just want to get your thoughts on a couple of things very quickly. The Bali Nine are home. It's a good thing, in my opinion. Premier, do you agree with me?

PREMIER:

Well, I'll tell you what it is good. It reminds a generation of Queenslanders who wouldn't have heard about it. young Queenslanders that you just don't do that. You don't go and try to bring drugs into this country from countries that have laws like that. And it you know, it sends a message and it reminds people that there are consequences for doing it. They're home now and they've got a they've got to be able to get on with their lives. But I what I want to do is use this as a reminder to people that we should have a zero tolerance for drugs coming into this country, and people should know the risks of going somewhere and getting them and bringing them back here. So I think if by doing that, we can send that message to a new generation who weren't around at that time, if it can stop one person going over destroying their lives and bringing drugs back and destroying a whole heap of other lives, I think it will have done its job.

PETER FEGAN:

There's some unrest in the Coalition. Keith Pitt has gone out swinging. He's had a go at David Littleproud saying that the National Party has lost its tag. It's going weak at the knees for the

Liberal Party He says that 2050 going emissions free isn't a great target. It's not going to be a great weekend for the Coalition unfortunately. And Peter Dutton, there's going to be a reshuffle. He's got four or five members walking away. I just want to ask you very quickly. I don't know if you've heard anything about a reshuffle. I don't know if you've heard anything about it whatsoever, but just on the nuclear debate, it's going to come to a...if he is elected as Prime Minister, there is going to come a moment where it comes to a head with the states. Are you ready for a fight or are you ready to work with him on nuclear?

PREMIER:

Well, let me just make a couple of points. The first is I know Peter Dutton better than most people, and I'll tell you, he'll make one hell of a prime minister. He really will. And anyone who knows him, people see Peter Dutton and understand that he's very competent and very strong, and they've seen him in those portfolios. And I have two I've seen another side of Peter Dutton, too. I think he's a compassionate person. He's empathetic, and I think he'll be a great Prime Minister. Now, regarding David Littleproud, because I have to make some comments there. I don't think anyone could accuse David of not standing up for the values. [inaudible] and he's part of the world. He's a great fighter. So, I wish Keith all the best. Don't share that view but I wish him all the best. And as for David Littleproud, he gets a big tick from me.

PETER FEGAN:

He does as well.

PREMIER:

[inaudible] values of rural and regional Queensland. On the nuclear stuff Peter, we've said our piece on that. What I don't want to do and this is why my focus is what it is at the moment.

Canberra will have a discussion and a debate about long term energy future. And we're talking about things that are many, years away, in fact decades away. And they can have that debate. And I would like to hope it's a little more grown up than what I've seen from the Labor Party today. That was a that was an absolute disgrace, backing some of those comments and shows that Chris Bowen is not up to the job that he's got. But put that to one side. I'll tell you why I can't get sidetracked on debates about energy uses into the future. Right now in Queensland, we've got the youngest fleet of coal fired power stations in the country, and they have not operated at capacity because of a former government that didn't spend money on it let it go boom and Queenslanders power prices went up by 19.9 per cent, which is three times higher than the national average. So, I can't let the debate move off that. I've got to get those things back up and running. I've got to convince people that we need a long-term plan to keep those coal fired power stations running at capacity, driving people's prices down. Now, I also have a view that there is a need for pumped hydro, because I think that will help firm up some of the renewables into the long-term. Canberra can discuss their energy mix, but I'm not letting the Labor Party off the hook on this in Queensland for their failures because everyday people can't afford their business electricity, can't afford to run their air conditioner at home for Christmas and it's because of ten years of really bad policy. That's my focus. That's where I am at the moment. Canberra can have their debate.

But in answer to the overarching question, do I think Peter Dutton should be Prime Minister? The answer starts with a Y and it's got an E and an S in it.

PETER FEGAN:

Okay. Let's relax. What are you doing for Christmas? What is the Premier of Queensland's day look like?

PREMIER:

A lot of pasta...

PETER FEGAN:

For Christmas?

PREMIER:

[inaudible] and I can tell you what, the day after looks like. It's me, a couple of daughters, a lot of cricket, a few mangoes, some of the Milton variety, others of the tree variety. Peter, I reckon uh, Tegan and I have done parenting pretty well. When we've got two daughters who love cricket as much as their father. That's a pretty good start. So yeah mate, very low key, be with the girls, I'm looking for to take a little bit of time off so far, looks like the Lord has been kind to us with Mother Nature. The sun has come out. Let's spend a bit of time watching a bit of cricket and enjoying life.

PETER FEGAN:

Perhaps block Rob Morrison's number for a day.

PREMIER:

He's sitting in front of me right now, and I'll make sure he knows not to call.

PETER FEGAN:

Now, Premier you've stitched yourself up here because I've been following your social media and you do some fast fire questions. And I've got a little thing called Feeg's Fast Five Questions. Are you ready to go? Are you ready for the challenge?

PREMIER:

Not. really, but I can't say no.

PETER FEGAN:

It's live. All right, you're ready to go?

PREMIER:

Yes.

PETER FEGAN:

Johnathan Thurston or Allan Langer?

PREMIER:

Oh, please don't offend me. Johnathan Thurston. Greatest ever.

PETER FEGAN:

Wally Lewis, Darren Lockyer?

PREMIER:

I'm going to go Lockie. Because of the versatility five eighth and fullback changed midway through career. So, I'm going to say the great Lockyer.

PETER FEGAN:

Palaszcuk or Miles?

PREMIER:

N/A

PETER FEGAN:

Townsville or Brisbane?

PREMIER:

You know I've got a soft spot for the North Peter. But I love all of Queensland.

PETER FEGAN:

Christmas ham or Christmas turkey?

PREMIER:

Turducken. Roll them all in.

PETER FEGAN:

Okay, there you go. Monday or a Friday?

PREMIER:

Oh, Friday. Friday afternoon, Friday afternoon is pretty special.

PETER FEGAN:

Favourite beach?

PREMIER:

Anywhere that's in Queensland and that I can share it with people I love.

PETER FEGAN:

Queensland win Origin or Cowboys win the grand final?

PREMIER:

It's close, but I'm going to say it's been ten years since the last one Peter and it happened against your club. So I'm going to say Cowboys and wouldn't that be beautiful in 2025? Let's do it again.

PETER FEGAN:

Howard or Hawke?

PREMIER:

Both greats of their party. But I've got so much respect for John Howard. I've saw him up close and personal. I thought he was a great Prime Minister, but both did great things for their political movements.

PETER FEGAN:

AM or FM? Be very careful.

PREMIER:

I'm going to answer that in two parts. Firstly, 4BC all day. But in answer the second bit AM or PM. You know, the answer is AM. I'm a morning person.

PETER FEGAN:

Matthew Hayden or Usman Khawaja?

PREMIER:

Oh, Matty Hayden.

PETER FEGAN:

Greatest Australian cricket captain?

PREMIER:

Close one. But I'm going to say AB because he led a side that was under the pump against the great West Indian team. He averaged over 50. He was tough. He was unforgiving. He's the pick of all of ours.

PETER FEGAN:

I've got two more. Shane Warne or Donald Bradman?

PREMIER:

The numbers say Don Bradman 99.94. But for flamboyance and colour, Shane Warne brought a lot to our lives.

PETER FEGAN:

Jarrold Bleijie or the Jarrod Bleijie cut out?

PREMIER:

Well, both would beat Cameron Dick in a debate.

PETER FEGAN:

[laughs] ah it's good to finish on a laugh, Premier can I just say thank you for always being available. You've come on here. You know, whether we agree with each other or not, you've always made yourself available for this station. I want to say a very Merry Christmas to you and all of your family. A very, very safe New Year as well. Can't wait to get back to brass tax next year, and I'm sure you'll appear on this station plenty of times. A very Merry Christmas to you and congratulations on everything you've achieved.

PREMIER:

Peter, to you and yours and congratulations on your elevation to your new role. We look forward to at times agreeing, at times crossing swords, but always trying to strive for a better Queensland. And when you say we agree on some, we disagree on others. Our choice of football teams will never be the same. But long may that continue. Happy Christmas and New Year to all the 4BC listeners. God bless.

[ENDS]

Station: 4BC Brisbane

Program: Mornings with Bill McDonald

Speaker/s: Deputy Opposition Leader Cameron Dick

Airdate: Friday 20 December 2024 10:07am

Duration: 18 minutes 02 seconds

E&OE

BILL McDONALD:

Queensland's former Labor Government will finish up the year, let's be honest licking their wounds and preparing for what will be the gruelling years ahead in opposition. So what lessons have been learned by the opposition and what plans are in motion for the future? To answer that very question, I'm pleased to welcome along the Deputy Opposition Leader Cameron Dick on the line this morning. Hello. Nice to talk with you again.

CAMERON DICK:

G'day Bill. Last program of the year. I hope you've left the best to last!

BILL McDONALD:

Oh, we have, we have. And I appreciate you having a chat with us because we...

CAMERON DICK:

It's nice to be on the show.

BILL McDONALD:

It's nice to talk with you again. Well, let's start with that. How are you to sum up the year? What lessons have been learned and what plans are in motion for the future? Before we get into specifics.

CAMERON DICK:

Oh, Bill, you know, we've had...it's been a big year for all Queenslanders. I think no matter where they live or what they do, whether it's been the weather, whether it's been, you know, what's happened in their own lives, you know, and we're working very hard now as an opposition. You know, I've never had more energy. I've come out of the election really energised to do my job well, to represent my community of Woodridge, but also to learn the lessons of the election, to rebuild our team in opposition. But then, of course, very importantly, do our job properly. And that's to hold the new government of David Crisafulli to account. And I think Queenslanders would be disappointed by some of the decisions the government's made since their election. And, you know, we're going to hold them to account for some of the things they've done that Queenslanders weren't expecting that have come out of the blue, and we're going to work very hard next year.

But we've got to listen to Queenslanders, rebuild, renew, refocus and get on with our job next year. And we'll be working across the Christmas break to get our systems, our processes and our policies back together.

BILL McDONALD:

Now, the LNP has spent the first few months in government exposing the apparent cost blow-outs that occurred under your watch. Opposition Leader Steven Miles claims they are fudging the numbers to make themselves look better. Regardless of the exact numbers, you must acknowledge that there were cases of fiscal indiscipline during your time in government?

CAMERON DICK:

Oh, look, Bill, you know, it wouldn't be surprising to you for me to disagree with that. And you just have to look at the report on state finances. Now, they're the audited accounts of the state for the last financial year. And what do they show? They showed as at 30th June, our budget surplus had gone up. It had gone up by \$1.1 billion to \$1.6 billion, and net government debt had been more than halved, from \$12 billion projected to less than six. And that's with all of those cost escalations that came into projects that I talked about in our budget that I funded. I think Queenslanders are seeing this for what it is. The numbers for David Crisafulli just don't add up his promises in the election, particularly how he was going to fund things are including, you know, these the miraculous \$7 billion he was going to take out of contractors and consultancies. That money's not there. It never was there. And it doesn't add up for him. And I think he's just softening Queenslanders up for cuts, which is why he's been going on and why the Transport Minister last week really just went straight over the edge with, you know, the cost escalations that he was putting into projects, including maintenance costs, which are never part of those projects, but that's now the new LNP standard. They're going to put the maintenance costs for construction projects out there. So I think Queenslanders know what's coming, and this is an attempt by the government to soften them up for the cuts that inevitably have to be made to deliver on their election commitments.

BILL McDONALD:

So are you saying no problems? You guys handled it all well, this is all made up. This is all being numbers fudged?

CAMERON DICK:

Oh, I think it's an exaggeration by the government in a desperate attempt to try and...

BILL McDONALD:

Haven't you got to accept some responsibility if you want people to listen and take the opposition seriously though?

CAMERON DICK:

Of course, Bill, you know, we lost the election. No question about that. We lost 15 seats. We got a belting in regional Queensland in particular. And you know that hasn't been lost on us. And you know we're out there listening and talking to Queenslanders. But I'm not going to accept a false narrative from the government who promised to spend more, lower taxes, not

spend one more dollar on debt. Now, it doesn't matter whether you're the kitchen table, running your own business or running the state, you can't promise to spend more, reduce taxes and lower debt without something having to give. And that's what's going to happen in Queensland. So that's all I'm saying. But you're right. We do need to listen to Queenslanders. We do need to listen and learn the lesson of the loss. And then take our time to talk to Queenslanders to rebuild, refocus, renew and then do our bit to make Queensland the best place in the world.

BILL McDONALD:

What's your take? Can you sort of try and set the record straight here, like the Transport Minister Brent Mickelberg, did say to us on the show that the maintenance costs for Cross River Rail were included in the contract. I think he quoted \$2.6 billion for that. What's the... where's that at? What's what do we believe?

CAMERON DICK:

Well, Bill, that's a new policy framework that this government has put together. And I asked the Finance Minister Ros Bates, about that. I asked her whether she'd been briefed by her department and whether she would release the new policy framework for the costing of capital works programs and all I got was a torrent of abuse in response to what I thought was a reasonably sensible question, given what the Transport Minister had actually said. So I was quite surprised at that, that, and I said, well, is that the approach that's going to be taken to the big projects for the Olympics? Are you going to put the maintenance costs in for that? Because that's what you've said you're doing for Transport. And so I think Queenslanders need to just take a step back here and not necessarily accept everything the government's saying. Don't take it for what it is. You need to look beyond that. And that's what our job is. Our job is to try and expose that, to say this doesn't add up, what's going to come and how Queenslanders are going to be hurt. And we've seen that already with the new, you know, the decision by the government to cut the construction contract in Townsville for the new hospital now, that's now been confirmed, workers on that project have been let go before Christmas. Subbies and contractors who've been lined up to do more work are now left in the lurch. This isn't the confidence David Crisafulli said he'd give to business. It's the complete opposite. So what other contracts are going to have to go up in an attempt to make the numbers add up?

BILL McDONALD:

This is in relation obviously to the BPIC...so no one could deny that safety is paramount on any worksite, but the financial benefits that are inserted into the policy with BPIC had nothing...it's nothing to do with safety. You argue the LNP are cutting jobs by suspending BPIC and pushing or pulling tenders to have a look and sharpen the pencil on major projects. But every stakeholder in the construction industry has applauded that move and said it's necessary to build the pipeline of infrastructure works that the state needs, including the Olympics and Paralympics.

CAMERON DICK:

Yeah, I mean, we need the infrastructure, that's right Bill...

BILL McDONALD:

Minus BPIC.

CAMERON DICK:

Well, you don't have to listen to me. You don't even have to listen to the LNP. You just need to listen to people like Scott Hutchinson. His family's been building in this state for more than a century. And Scott Hutchinson, who's a very, very respected business leader, said BPICs weren't to blame for impacting productivity. It was demand, unprecedented demand in the construction industry. And he said the skilled labour shortage meant workers would still be able to negotiate enterprise bargaining agreements with conditions similar to BPIC. And that's what we were trying to do, make sure...

BILL McDONALD:

He's the one bloke that I've heard that's not criticised BPIC and he's a big player, admittedly in the building industry, but the construction stakeholders that no matter where you talk, they all say, no, we can't sustain this with BPIC conditions. The 30 per cent, roughly 30 per cent that gets added to every project and the lack of productivity that comes with it.

CAMERON DICK:

Yeah, I'll say two things. Firstly, our job as government was to deliver projects for the big growth state of Australia. So, you know, the population is exploding here, and we need to deliver those projects. We also needed to keep the construction companies and the workers that we needed in this state. And we're not the only state that's faced cost escalation. We had up 30 per cent increase in the cost of construction from the ABS over three years. Similar numbers in Western Australia, in New South Wales, in South Australia. You know, we're not on our own there. But you know, if that's the case, well then the LNP needs to stop complaining. If they can make a 30 per cent reduction in the cost of construction, they'll be able to deliver all these projects and more. I don't believe that's the case because we've got a hot construction market. We've got really high costs of construction in the state. We need to support Queensland businesses and workers, but if that's the case, they should stop whingeing. I mean, sometimes they don't...

BILL McDONALD:

Aren't they high and contributing to the high costs is the BPIC? element.

CAMERON DICK:

Our view was to make sure we paid what needed to be paid to keep construction companies and workers in jobs in Queensland. And there is a skill shortage here.

BILL McDONALD:

BPIC has added to the cost of construction, though.

CAMERON DICK:

Our view was that reflected market rates. That's the reality, you know, I mean, let the government release the information they say supports that. You know, they haven't done that. They don't do that. They just do a press conference. They don't really...

BILL McDONALD:

Why are we leading the nation in construction costs escalation then?

CAMERON DICK:

Well, we're not you know, we're not Bill, with respect, you know, the cost escalation in other states is similar to Queensland and they don't have spikes. That's just the truth. So it went up. This is the producer price index from the ABS I don't want to bore your listeners, it went up 31 per cent here. It's gone up at a similar pace in other states around Australia. And so you know we're not on our own there. You just look at the Brisbane Metro, you know Adrian Schinner's key project that blew out by almost 100 per cent, it went up to \$1.7 billion. It was 15 months late. Similarly for the bridge over Kangaroo Point. You know...

BILL McDONALD:

If you want to go to projects, we could look at the Copperstring project. We could look at the faster rail project down the coast. We could look at Cross River Rail projects that were all part of your government for a couple of terms.

CAMERON DICK:

Yeah, but we were upfront about that Bill. You know, I said that in my budget speech, not just this year, but last year.

BILL McDONALD:

Former Transport Minister Mark Bailey was never up front with stuff. It had to be revealed. And anyway. Can we talk about the Olympics? Your government was heavily criticised for the money and time spent on reviews and consultations that were ultimately ignored in the end, and you're now the Shadow State Infrastructure Minister, what would you do differently?

CAMERON DICK:

Well, you know the responsibilities now with the government. You know, we had a plan, Bill, and at least we were up front with Queenslanders. You know, we were very clear, not everyone would agree with it. Not everyone liked it. But we were up front with Queenslanders, and we said what we would do with those stadiums within the you know, as you know, the new norms of the Olympics movement to make sure the Games were fiscally, socially, environmentally sustainable and that they didn't break the bank.

BILL McDONALD:

Why couldn't you get that done within the three-year early envelope that we had to get them prepared? Why couldn't that be done under Labor for those three years?

CAMERON DICK:

Well, I think people have judged us on that Bill. I think, you know, you talk about listening to the community. I think they have judged us on that. But of course, you know, the government now has to deliver on its promises, which is no new stadium. And if you said it one time, he said it 100 times, David Crisafulli so you know, he's now in a real pickle, you know, because he promised this to Queenslanders, he said there'd be no new stadium. He didn't want our plan, but he would never tell Queenslanders what the plan is. And what do we get? You know, I mean, you can be critical of our reviews and that's fair enough. But he's now done another review. And so, you know, we've got to wait to see what that review is going to come up with. And I think we'll see another broken promise. And we'll also see a very expensive projects that they're going to have to now deliver.

BILL McDONALD:

Yeah, I'd agree with you there on another review. We didn't need another review. What's your preference. You've seen them all. You would have seen them all in the paper. And every architect in town just about got a concept design drawing. And I know you had QSAC was Steven Miles' pick. But where do you see it going? What's your pick?

CAMERON DICK:

Oh, look, you know, we had a plan, and that included QSAC, and I don't think it's out in the scrub or out in the bush. I think it's pretty disrespectful of southsiders, frankly. You know, it's just about 15 minutes down the road. And I grew up on the south side. I know that stadium well. We had a plan there. But you know, that responsibility is not ours anymore, Bill. That's the government's responsibility. And it's over to them to see if they can deliver on their promise. And I don't think they can. They're going to build something new. It's going to cost a lot of money, and they're going to have to make that add up within their promise to lower debt and lower revenue. And I just don't think that can be done without cutting other projects like the Townsville Hospital.

BILL McDONALD:

In the last week of Parliament, obviously you guys voted. The opposition voted to support the Crisafulli Government's new youth crime laws. Was that because you now acknowledge that your government's approach didn't work?

CAMERON DICK:

Oh, I think we need to listen to the community about community safety. I think that was one issue in the campaign Bill, you know, and we accept that, you know, we tried to improve that Bill. We accepted that some parts of that bill, the government had an electoral mandate to deliver. But like a lot of things the LNP does, there was then an overreach. Other things that went into the bill that we thought should be the subject of further examination, that were criticised by almost everybody who made submissions to the parliamentary committee. That

was unsuccessful. Now it's over to the government again to deliver on their promises of lower victim numbers across the state. They've now got the tools they need to do the job. I haven't seen crime stop in the state, but it's over to the LNP now and David Crisafulli to deliver on what they said they would do. And they now have whatever they say they need to deliver that it's over to them and they've now got the law they wanted. They now have to deliver for the people.

BILL McDONALD:

Well there were a few fractures, of course, within, uh, within the Labor Party and debating that and before deciding to agree to that, and I think Jonty Bush threatened to leave the party, are you united because there's talk of rumblings of a leadership spill that could happen over the Christmas holidays. Apparently, the unions want that. Have you heard that? Where's that at?

CAMERON DICK:

[laughs] I just think...

BILL McDONALD:

And your name is front and centre. [laughs]

CAMERON DICK:

No, that's just more game playing by Jarrod Bleijie and David Crisafulli. As I said earlier, sometimes I don't think they even understand they're in government. They want to play the games they played in opposition. You know our position was clear on the bill. We supported it. We voted for it. We gave the government the tools they asked for. They can't be critical of us. You know, Dan Purdie, the Police Minister, said crime would be down by Christmas. That's what he said. And so it's over to them now. Where are united team. You know, people are entitled to express their view in the party room. It's the same in the LNP. You hear the arguments now about nuclear energy going on in the LNP at a national level. People are entitled to express their view. But we did that in the party room and now people are getting on with the job that we are paid to do, which is to hold the government to account for its promises and everything they promised to do for Queensland. And, you know, we're seeing some of those cuts, we're seeing some of the projects stop. We're seeing the disrespect to a whole range of stakeholders and people in the state. And I think that's not fresh, and it's not the start that Queenslanders were expecting from David Crisafulli.

BILL McDONALD:

Well, Steven Miles for two years has rejected our request to come on and speak and answer the questions of our listeners. So I appreciate you doing it. You've come on many times and I'll give you credit for that, and I thank you for that and wish you Merry Christmas. What are you doing for Christmas and New Years?

CAMERON DICK:

Well, you know, family time Bill, you know, the family didn't see much of me this year. They might be happy about that. But we need to get together. You know, I'll get together with my brother Milton and my sister Susan and her family. You know, we'll have a couple of traditions in our family. My late mum used to make a boiled Christmas pudding, you know, with the threepence in it and the sixpence. My, sisters kept that. That's now her job. And then we'll have some prawns. We'll have some roast pork, that sort of stuff. Some ham as well. And we'll just get together and enjoy, a time for family and just to think about the year past and then have a bit of a rest and then get ready for a big year ahead Bill. And all the best to you and your listeners. Thanks for putting me on. You've always been very fair to me, and I appreciate that opportunity.

BILL McDONALD:

Thank you very much. You're welcome here anytime Cameron Dick and have a Merry Christmas to you and yours. And all the best for next year.

CAMERON DICK:

Merry Christmas Bill, and Merry Christmas to you listeners.

[ENDS]

Station: ABC
Program: 7.30
Compere: Laura Tingle
Interviewee: Premier David Crisafulli
Date: 7 January 2025, 7:30pm
Duration: 8mins 40sec

E&OE

LAURA TINGLE:

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has kicked off the political year in Queensland, announcing spending on infrastructure and health. That includes a \$7.2 billion commitment to fund major upgrades to the Bruce Highway, the artery of the state, from north to south. Queensland Premier David Crisafulli has immediately pledged to bring forward the state's share of spending to get work underway. The Premier joins me now from Brisbane. Premier, welcome to 7.30.

PREMIER:

Good evening, Laura. Thanks for having me.

LAURA TINGLE:

You lobbied hard for the \$7.2 billion of new money. You and the Prime Minister have spoken about priorities. Where is it going to be spent? Are there agreed priorities? Who gets to finally determine where it will be spent? And how quickly can you get the work underway?

PREMIER:

Laura, we've set up an independent advisory council to take all of the politics out of it, and that's been a really big part of the problem over the last decade. There just hasn't been that long term plan, and there's been too much short termism, too much things done on that political focus. By having that independent council, by getting the best and brightest around the table, by making sure that we've got a long term vision, it removes that. It removes it being about what's in the political interest and it's about that long term plan for the Bruce. In the end, two thirds of Queenslanders rely on that road. And you used the word, the lifeblood, it really is. It's that artery. It's the difference between someone getting home safely to their loved ones. It's the difference between the economic survival for regional Queensland. So if one part of that road goes out, it just affects the communities the length and breadth of it. So it's important we remove the politics from that. This returns the funding arrangement to the 80-20 that it's always been. It is a federal road. It's important they do the lion's share of it. Our role will be to do proper planning and make sure that projects can be delivered on time and on budget, and I'm confident we can do both.

LAURA TINGLE:

Well, individual projects might have the politics taken out of them, but Labor is way behind in the polls in Queensland. Will this decision resonate with Queenslanders given how important the road is? And has the PM stolen a march on Peter Dutton over this? There have been conflicting positions from Mr Dutton, Angus Taylor and David Littleproud which suggest the Coalition may have been caught a little flat footed.

PREMIER:

Laura, others can comment on the politics of it. I'm not a political commentator, but I'm there to rattle the tin and do the right thing by my state. And I've always said I've got to be on the maroon team. And regardless whether it's a red team or a blue team in Canberra, I've got to be on Team Maroon and fight for our fair share. Now I make the observation that the opposition, Mr Dutton, has committed to this previously. In the end, we welcome the funding commitment from the Prime Minister because it gives us that ability to deliver what Queenslanders want. I just can't stress how important this road is. There were approaching 80 occasions in the last 12 months where that road was cut off for some period of time. Now, whether that be via an accident or flooding, that's unacceptable. And for anyone who's driven that road, it is a goat track. And we wouldn't accept it anywhere else in the country and I don't accept it for my state. It is below standards. There are so many parts of that road that just aren't up to scratch. And we've seen the loss of... of too many loved ones, 42 in fact, in the last 12 months. And we've seen the economic impacts of it as well. It's just not up to standard. So I'll let others comment about the politics of it. I'm going to use the opportunity with the federal election to get what my state needs and what's been lacking for too long. And in a short period of time, we've been able to broker what hasn't been able to be done for some time, and that is bipartisan agreement on that. And you bet that we're going to drive value for money for Queenslanders.

LAURA TINGLE:

Well, speaking of bipartisanship and the like, you've made clear that you do not agree with the federal Coalition's nuclear policy. Why is that?

PREMIER:

Well, we've got an energy plan and we've put that forward. But what I would ask for everyone participating in this is to park some of the childish rhetoric that I've seen. And some of the commentary that I've seen in recent days, including from the federal Treasurer, I don't think that does any good for the public discourse of the quality of debate, and I don't think people want to see that. Now, by all means, that's argument that Canberra can wage, but it should be done on facts. There shouldn't be silly memes and fish with lots of eyes, that's just childish.

LAURA TINGLE:

Absolutely, it is...

PREMIER:

I don't think people want to see that.

LAURA TINGLE:

... and I'm sure that that's right. But for a national audience, I'm just not sure that they know what it is that you object to about the nuclear policy. Is it the economics? Is it safety issues? What's the problem?

PREMIER:

Well, we put forward a plan and I'll explain why we put forward that plan. In the last 12 months, Queensland's power prices went up by 19.9 per cent. Now that's three times the national average. Now, there is one thing that Queensland has that the other states don't, and that is the youngest fleet of coal fired power stations, and they haven't operated at their capacity for the better part of three years. Now, our focus was, and we said to the Queensland population before the election, that we will get those plants operating to drive down those power prices. And then we've spoken about renewable energy and we've spoken about pumped hydro as a way of storage. So we've put forward that plan. Now, in terms of the argument about nuclear, that'll be something that Canberra can debate and that'll be something that will happen as part of the federal election campaign. I'm asking people to do it in the right way. We saw some things during the Queensland campaign and to the credit of the voters in Queensland, they saw through it. But no one wins when politics gets reduced to childish barbs. No one wins when there's scare campaigns. So let's debate that on facts and we look forward to playing our role in making sure that energy for Queenslanders are affordable, reliable and sustainable.

LAURA TINGLE:

Just on more local issues, Premier, your major campaign issue in the state election was youth crime. It was reported yesterday there have been 272 youth arrested or charged since you passed tough new laws three weeks ago, but your police chief says the rate of offending is also up. The Adult Crime, Adult Time policy is contentious. But could I ask you a practical question? Have you got enough incarceration capacity to deal with the upsurge in numbers? And are you budgeting for increased capacity?

PREMIER:

Laura, in two parts. Firstly, we have to make sure that we deal with early intervention as well to turn kids around before a lifetime of crime. We do have a generation of repeat hardcore offenders who have gone through the system, and it has been a broken system. And the state is in a youth crime crisis and that's why we do need those stronger laws. We also do need to do early intervention. In terms of the incarceration capacity, I don't want to see kids in watch houses. We do want to see permanent facilities. There have been delays and poor planning. My role will be to make sure that we can bring on facilities that are delivered to, to be able to meet demand. What happens in those facilities is equally important. At the moment, young offenders in youth detention centres aren't getting the education they deserve. In fact, less than three days, a three hours per day is the average across those centres. I don't accept that. I want to see kids within jails being given the opportunity to turn their life around when they go on the outside. When they do leave prison, I want to see them have the support services around them to turn their life around. That's not happening at the moment. So we've failed a generation of kids right throughout that system. So yes, we are, we have passed stronger laws

to act as a deterrent, to make sure that the worst of the worst are dealt with. And I do believe that will have an impact. So too will early intervention and rehabilitation when a young person leaves prison.

LAURA TINGLE:

Premier, so many questions, so few minutes. We look forward to having you back to discuss a lot more issues in the future.

PREMIER:

Appreciate your time, Laura. Thanks for having me on.

[ENDS]

Released under RTI - DPC

Station: Channel 9

Program: Today

Speaker/s: Premier David Crisafulli

Airdate: Tuesday 7 January 2025

Duration: 6 minutes 18 seconds

E&OE

ALEX CULLEN:

It's the question Queenslanders have been asking for years. Just when will the notorious Bruce Highway get an upgrade?

JAYNE AZZOPARDI:

Well, now we have an answer. With the PM pledging over \$7 billion to overhaul the dangerous road, which claimed more than 40 lives last year alone. We're joined now by Queensland Premier David Crisafulli in Brisbane. Good morning to you, Premier and congratulations on getting the money. When are we going to see these upgrades? Because there are concerns that it could take a while.

PREMIER:

Good morning, Jayne. We're going to see them straight away. And there's no ifs no buts no maybes. It has to happen. And you're right. It's a great win for the state. And we didn't take a backward step. The funding arrangement has always been 80-20 on the Bruce Highway. The Federal Government's always paid the lion's share. It's their highway. What's been missing is the state advocating to have that return, but also a proper, coherent plan. So, one of the first things we did when we came to office was establish a Bruce Highway Advisory Council. That takes all the politics out of it. It gets the best and brightest around the table to work with the department and identify those hotspots. But it also creates a body that can advocate. And I've had the minister out there, I've had this group out there, we've been banging the drum and common sense has won through. So, we get our fair share and now we get cracking and we start delivering works. And I want works to happen and to start this year. It's got to be underway. This means too much, particularly for regional Queensland. It's life or death. It is an absolute goat track. It is the lifeblood for regional Queenslanders and it's at an unacceptable level. And I've been saying that for a long time, and we're now in a position to do something about it. And you bet we will.

ALEX CULLEN:

Yeah, Premier this is 100 per cent needed. But politics I think, does play some part here. One of your key focuses as Premier and you're claiming victory, but do you think maybe this has more to do with the PM being about to face an election? Many would say he's starting the campaign trail early.

PREMIER:

In the end, if it's taken that to deliver what's always been business as usual, well, we'll welcome it. I've always said I'm on the maroon team. I don't care if it's red team or blue team in Canberra. I'm on the maroon team. I make the observation. We've now got both sides of politics committed to this. Peter Dutton has backed this and backed this previously. We've now got the Prime Minister doing the same. So, we're in a really good position. And what our role is now is to plan properly, which has been missing for ten years, but also too when we're delivering the work, we've got to deliver value for money. The days of every project in Queensland, blowing out in time and in dollars has to be a thing of the past. And I've made my expectations really, clear to the minister, to the department. We've got to make sure that we drive value for money. In the end, this is taxpayers money. And it doesn't matter if you're a taxpayer in Queensland, Australia, if you're paying your rates, people just want to see value for money. And that's what we're going to deliver. There are so many sections of the Bruce Highway that is at an unacceptable standard, and we wouldn't cop it anywhere else. And I don't cop it for Queensland. So we are going to upgrade those situations that are the worst. That is the first priority. You take the politics out of it. In the end, that road has so many sections that go under with flooding. You mentioned Jayne in the introduction about the fatalities. There have been too many lives lost, and we have to do something about it. And work begins now, and it begins in earnest.

JAYNE AZZOPARDI:

Well, let's hope so. Premier another issue that you campaigned strongly on was youth crime. Your Attorney-General is now appealing a teenager's sentence over a crash that claimed three lives in Maryborough. The 13-year-old at the time will spend six years in detention, 60 per cent of that time behind bars. When you look at that, do you have faith in your justice system?

PREMIER:

It makes me really disappointed, and it makes me sad. And I've met some of the family who lost loved ones in that situation, and it breaks their heart to see those sentences. And the attorney has described it as manifestly inadequate. And I think that she's nailed it. That's exactly what it is. Now, bear in mind these people were tried under the former laws. We have put in place the strongest youth crime laws in the nation, and we're serious about that. And right now, we have operations where the police are throwing the kitchen sink at this. They are out in force making arrests. So, into the future, we have to do all we can to make sure we drive this down. But our view is that this sentence doesn't reflect what people in the community want to see. And we owe it to those families and to every Queenslanders to put up a fight on that one.

ALEX CULLEN:

Yeah. Premier you promised to lower youth crime, but you have your Police Commissioner saying that youth crime is getting even more violent. Are you confident these laws are working? Is it going to plan?

PREMIER:

He's right. They're more brazen. There's more of them. Ten years ago, the laws were watered down by the former government. It just created a generation of what I describe as hardcore, repeat untouchables. They think that their rights are greater than the rights of the victim. Now, the new laws have been enforced for less than a month. And I hope that people are seeing the effort that's going in over the Christmas period. This is a time when many people, quite rightly, get a chance to put their feet up. Well, the men and women of the Queensland Police Service haven't had that opportunity. They have been out there in force. And you've seen in recent days operations on the Gold Coast and the South Burnett, a huge activity in North Queensland. And that's going to continue. And we've given the laws to be able to deal with these hardcore repeat offenders. And I've said that this is the first change. There will be more. We're also going to get serious about early intervention. But you're asking about how important this is to me. There has to be fewer victims. This is the number one priority for this state. And I'm determined to make sure that whilst there will always be crime in any state, we've got to drive that crime down. And I think Queenslanders are looking at it and saying, well, we're doing what we said we were going to do before the election and that is going to be a focus of this government every single day.

ALEX CULLEN:

All right. Premier thanks so much for being with us.

[ENDS]

Station: Channel 7

Program: Sunrise

Speaker/s: Premier David Crisafulli

Airdate: Tuesday 7 January 2025

Duration: 4 minutes 13 seconds

E&OE

MONIQUE WRIGHT:

Well, more on our top story now. And Queensland is battling a youth crime surge this morning, 227 juveniles have been arrested and charged with almost 500 offences since David Crisafulli's government introduced tougher youth crime laws three weeks ago. The state's Police Commissioner warns that young criminals are becoming more violent and brazen, adding that tougher laws will only yield results if the courts do their job as well. Joining us now is the Queensland Premier David Crisafulli, who is live in Brisbane. Morning to you, Premier, thanks for being with us. All right. So, more arrests aren't necessarily a good thing, right? We want to see less crime, don't we?

PREMIER:

It shows that we're throwing the kitchen sink at it. And we have to do that because the state is in the grips of a youth crime crisis. And I've said that really clearly before the election, and my focus is as determined as ever after it. And it's been less than a month since those new laws passed, and I hope Queenslanders are seeing how serious we are. This is Christmas time, a time when most people put their feet up and the staff of the Queensland Police Service are out there to see the activity in the past few weeks. It really shows how serious they are about using these new laws to their effect. So, we've seen a huge presence on the Gold Coast, in North Queensland. We've had an operation in the South Burnett. They are throwing the resources at it, and it has to happen. We can't continue to see victim numbers rise in this state, and these actions are proof of how serious we are. We are literally throwing everything at it.

MONIQUE WRIGHT:

Premier you've just mentioned that victims' numbers and you have actually said that you'll resign if victims don't come down. Preventing the crime really is what we want to do, isn't it? Is this problem more complex than you thought when you were in opposition?

PREMIER:

It's a great point. No, I know how serious this issue is, and it's been ten years in the making. So, a decade ago, the former government took the decision to water down the laws. So, you've got ten years of repeat hardcore young offenders. They think they're untouchable. And on the back of it, they are running riot through people's homes, through their businesses, through their lives. So, make no mistake, this is our big focus, and we are going to get on top

of it. And what we announced yesterday is a dedicated Youth Crime Taskforce. Not a fly by night, not a short-term fix, a long-term approach. And we're going to lock that in indefinitely. This is going to be the focus. And we are going to drive down victim numbers I and to see how the frontline police have embraced this gives me confidence that we are on the right track. And the best way to do that is you send a message. We've given the courts the laws, and now we have to make sure that flows through to make sure that those consequences for actions are there. Now, you also mentioned a really good point, and that is early intervention. We've got to do that. We've got to turn kids around early as well.

MONIQUE WRIGHT:

Okay. Now that you're in government, is there something that you understand now that you didn't previously about why this is so bad?

PREMIER:

No. We understand how deep the problem is. The difference between me and my predecessors is I'm going to come and front up and talk about it and put forward solutions and deal with it. And I hope Queenslanders are seeing that we are being transparent with numbers, we're being transparent with operations, and we are throwing the kitchen sink at this because Queenslanders have asked us to. So, I'm under no illusions how deep the problem is. I spent a lot of time, particularly in regional Queensland, where this was the epicentre. This all started in Townsville when that, the people of that city bravely called this out and it has spread throughout the state. And for ten years we've had excuses, we've had fob offs, we've had residents told that it's not an issue. You bet it's an issue, which is why police are dealing with it the way they are, which is why we've given them the laws to do their job, which is why we're going to make sure that thin blue line doesn't keep getting thinner, and we're going to give more police. But we also have to do early intervention and turn kids around. And we're working overtime on that as well.

MONIQUE WRIGHT:

Okay. Well, you've said that you'll resign if those victim numbers don't come down. We appreciate your time. Premier David Crisafulli, thank you.

PREMIER:

Thanks, Mon.

[ENDS]

Station: Sky News Live

Program: First Agenda

Compere: Kenny Heatley

Interviewee: Premier David Crisafulli

Date: 13 January 2025

Duration: 4mins 40sec

E&OE

KENNY HEATLEY:

A Queensland Police specialist fly in squad will triple in size after a \$32 million funding boost by the state government. Joining me live now is Queensland Premier David Crisafulli. Premier, appreciate you coming on the program. Thank you. Firstly, what is the fly in squad? Can you tell us, and what can they do, and what have they been able to achieve so far since inception?

PREMIER:

It's a dedicated group that can go into communities where there are hot spots. Where crime is emerging, they can go in, they can clear things up. They give the backup to the officers on the ground. It's a dedicated muscle unit, and we've looked at it, and whilst it's been far too small in number and not permanent, I looked at the model and thought, there's some really good opportunities here for the future. So we've more than tripled it in size. So it's gone from 17 to 58, that's the our vision for it. And they will be permanent officers. So we're not going to be pinching them from other parts of the Queensland Police Service. They will be dedicated officers. We said to Queenslanders before the election that we were going to do absolutely everything to deal with, particularly the youth crime crisis, but crime across the board. Now we said we'd have stronger laws, and we delivered that. So before Christmas, we put in place the Making Queensland Safer laws. That's Adult Crime, Adult Time. Well, this is the next step in it, and that's giving police the resources to do their job. And we are determined to make sure that that thin blue line doesn't keep getting thinner, and so we have a focus to make sure we grow the Queensland Police Service across the board. But we're also going to triple this unit, and that is a dedicated rapid response unit to go in and clear things up and send a message that the days of the rampant crime crisis in Queensland will become a thing of the past.

KENNY HEATLEY:

Federal Liberal MP Julian Lesser says National Cabinet should meet this week and set out mandatory prison sentences for those who target Jewish synagogues. Would this be something that you would support?

PREMIER:

I'd be there in an instant. I'd only have to get the call, and I'd be on a plane heading to Canberra to deal with it. I just think it's that important. So whatever it takes. We have to be prepared to do it, because, let's be honest, the rise in anti-semitism in the country is the worst that we've seen in a century, and it can't go on. We're better than that as Australians, and we have to send the clearest message. So we've said that if there's any response... if there's anything that happens in Queensland, we will respond with the full force of the law. But I do think there is an opportunity across the country to send that signal, and the time is right now to do it.

KENNY HEATLEY:

Queensland's top union bosses threatened mass rolling strike action at hospitals, schools and police stations this year, like in 2024 in New South Wales and Victoria, if your government fails to deliver big pay rises across the public service. What's your response to that threat?

PREMIER:

Well, negotiations are just underway, so we'll deal with it in good faith. I'm not one for threats. I'm not one to try to escalate things. I'm one to sit down and deal with people and get a good outcome. That's the way I've always been, and I genuinely do look forward to dealing with the unions, with individual workers. I want the Queenslanders to know my vision is for the best public service in the country, and we need that because right now in Queensland, service delivery because of a lack of planning, because of a lack of funding, because of a detailed strategy, it's just fallen across the board. Youth, crime, health, housing, cost of living, all of those things, if we're going to turn them around, we need a world class public service. So that's a public service that's secure in its employment, that understands that it can be part of those challenges. I've spoken a lot about the need to upskill the public service so we're not constantly farming things out to the Big Four consultants, which we've been addicted to doing in Queensland. In order to do that, you need to have a world class public service, and we are determined to make sure we deliver that. When it comes to the front line, I do want to see a front line that's secure in its work, that's well paid for what it does, and we will negotiate in good faith, I can assure you.

KENNY HEATLEY:

Are you expecting a year of disruption?

PREMIER:

I'm expecting to deal with people who want what's right for working class people, and if that attitude works, if that's the spirit of negotiations that people go into it, I'm very confident we can strike the right balance. And I've always said there's, there's one militant union that has run rough shot in Queensland and across the country, that's the CFMEU. But across the board, other unions I believe, want what I want, and that's workers that are well paid, that are safe in their job and for productivity to be front and centre. And provided that's the spirit of negotiations, I've got every faith that we can get the right outcomes.

KENNY HEATLEY:

Premier, it's great to talk with you. Thanks so much. Good to see you.



[ENDS]

Released under RTI - DPC

Station: Channel 9

Program: Today

Compere: Karl Stefanovic

Interviewee: Premier David Crisafulli

Date: 13 January 2024, 7:25am approx.

Duration: 3mins 50sec

E&OE

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Well, Queensland is boosting the blue line, injecting more than \$32 million over five years to the State Flying Squad, a youth crime rapid response unit. For all the details joined by Queensland Premier David Crisafulli. Premier, good morning to you. Thanks for your time this morning. The state's largest police flying squad with 58 officers. How is it going to work?

PREMIER:

It's a dedicated team, Karl, and they go into areas where trouble emerges and they help clean up the crime rate and they help keep the community safe. And I said before the election, and I'll say it after the election, Queensland's in a youth crime crisis particularly, and we can't accept business as usual. So the first step was Making Queensland Safer laws, Adult Crime, Adult Time. We said that it would be law by Christmas. It is. This is now about boosting those resources. Now, we've got a real focus on making sure we grow the permanent police presence as well. But this is a dedicated flying squad that goes into those areas where there are hotspots. Currently it's at 17. It's going to grow to 58. So more than triple. They're going to be dedicated. They're going to be fully funded. It's going to be for the long term, and they are going to help deal with the crime crisis that's gripping this state.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Okay. You're going to require 41 new full time policing positions. I note with interest that you're going to places like Victoria. I don't know how you possibly convince a copper in Victoria to go to Queensland to be a police officer. Not easy, I wouldn't have thought with the weather and such things.

SARAH ABO:

Karl.

PREMIER:

Yeah, Karl, we were thinking of advertising around June, July. We reckon that'll be a sweet spot, mate.

[laughter]

KARL STEFANOVIC:

You can wear shorts. On a serious note, though, I mean, you're going to need these resources. You've made a lot of promises and those promises you're going to need to keep.

PREMIER:

Yeah, we are. And the, what we have to do is make sure that thin blue line doesn't keep getting thinner. So there's three elements. The first is the police that we have got to respect them and value them, give them the laws to do their job. Let them know that they've got a government that's got their back. So that's underway. The second is the pipeline. We're making good inroads there. We want more people to see police as a calling, as a great career, and we want more of the best and brightest to choose to go and train at the academies. The third element, as you say, is can we attract the best and brightest from interstate and overseas? And I sincerely believe we will. And you mentioned the weather. Of course, that's part of it. But there's also a real element of interest from people to want to be part of generational change. And I want people who are applying or considering applying to understand that you're going to be part of a police service where the government's got your back, and you get to live in Queensland, which is pretty special.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Just finally, I noted also with interest, the Bruce Highway promises. That dog of a highway that needs to be rebuilt. Do you actually feel that we're ever going to see that? Because I will run naked up it if it's built.

PREMIER:

Yeah, well, it's worth doing just to stop that happening. But look, we have to have a focus on making sure there's a generational plan. And that hasn't been the case. So it's been too haphazard. It's been too political. It's been about let's just do this. We've put in place a group of people to help guide that. We want a generational plan for the Bruce. We've got funding from both sides of Canberra. And what we have now is a detailed plan to get on with it. And I assure your viewers you're going to see shovels in the road this year. It has to occur and it's never going to be perfect, but it needs to be a hell of a lot better than what it is now...

KARL STEFANOVIC:

That's for sure.

PREMIER:

... too many lives lost, too many days lost, and too much impact for people's livelihoods and indeed their family situation.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

All right. And just me doing my little bit for the Bruce Highway. Thanks, Premier.

PREMIER:

Just keep those close on, mate. We'll all be happy. Thank you.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

I don't want to get arrested again.

[ENDS]

Released under RTI - DPC

Station: Channel 7
 Program: Sunrise
 Compere: <name>
 Interviewee: <name>
 Date: <date>
 Duration: <minutes> <seconds>

E&OE

DAVD WOIWOD:

The Queensland Government is refusing to cover the cost of adding fluoride to the state's water supply, with Premier David Crisafulli arguing councils should use existing funding to pay for it themselves.

EDWINA BARTHOLOMEW:

So at the moment, just 25 out of Queensland's 77 council areas have fluoride in their water. That's despite pleas from medical experts who say it's a vital move that would help protect the state's dental health. For more, let's bring in the Queensland Premier David Crisafulli, who's live in Brisbane. Happy New Year to you, Premier. Let's start with this fluoride issue. Funding aside, do you think all Queenslanders should have access to fluoridated water because most other states seem to have it standardised?

PREMIER:

Absolutely. And I was part of a council in Townsville that's had continuous supply of fluoride in the water since 1964. So you're dealing with 60 years of medical records there. So the truth is it works. It's been a long standing practise in Queensland that councils have had the choice about whether or not to fluoridate. And the reason behind that is there's so many different treatment plants across many councils, and some of them aren't used for human consumption or in many cases, only a very small portion. And councils have mounted the case to governments of both political persuasions for a long, long period of time that they should have the choice, because otherwise there's big costs involved in the capital and the ongoing operation of those individual plants. But if you're asking whether or not I support it, the answer is you bet. And there's some very, very long term research that shows why.

EDWINA BARTHOLOMEW:

So the research supports it, then who pays for it? If you do support it, are you going to foot the bill?

PREMIER:

Well, historically it's been local government for a long time. Now, there's a number of grants that come from both the federal and the State Government that aren't tied, and councils can choose to use that. My message is where water is used for human consumption, water should be fluoridated because the health benefits are there. And there's long term evidence of that.

DAVD WOIWOD:

Yep. Decades worth of evidence there, Premier. Moving on, you're targeting Queensland's crime hotspots with a major new investment in the State's Flying Police Squad. How will this protect Queenslanders?

PREMIER:

Well, it's a dedicated squad that can go in and deal with issues as they emerge. And historically you've seen a very, very small unit and it hasn't had the horsepower to be able to do that job. Now, I've spoken a lot about Queensland's youth crime crisis and I won't be taking a backward step on that. I said that before the election and I'll continue to talk about it after the election. Police asked for stronger laws. They've got those now. We implemented the Making Queensland Safer laws, which is Adult Crime, Adult Time, and we said we'd do that by Christmas and we have. This is about the resources. And what it does is it creates a dedicated squad and it embeds it for the long term. So at the moment there's 17 officers. That's going to be more than tripled to 58. And where there are issues, they go in on the ground and they help the police who are there to clear things up, send a strong message, bolster the presence. One way or another, I want Queenslanders to know we are throwing the kitchen sink at this. Stronger laws, more police and a government that's serious about dealing with it because we are not going to continue to see victim numbers rise year on year as they have for the last 10 years. And a decision was taken to weaken the *Youth Justice Act*. We haven't done early intervention as a state the way we should for a generation, and that is going to be turned around. And I want Queenslanders to know we are serious about doing this.

EDWINA BARTHOLOMEW:

So was it previously they'd maybe take a detective off a big case and then deploy them to hotspot regions. That's not going to happen anymore. You're going to have this dedicated taskforce, but that requires more officers. You're going to poach them from other states? What are you going to do?

PREMIER:

You bet we will. There's three parts of our strategy. The first is we want to retain those that we've got, and we've got some amazing officers in the Queensland Police Service, but they're leaving in droves because they haven't had the laws or a government that's had their back. And we want them to know that that's changed. The second is the pipeline and we're making good inroads there. We want people to look at policing as a vocation, as a calling, and we want people across the state to put their hand up to come and join the Queensland Police Service and become recruits. And the third is, as you say, attracting the best and brightest from interstate and overseas. And we want them to know that they can come to Queensland

where they're going to have the laws to do their job, the resources to do their job, and they get to live in Queensland. And why wouldn't you want to do that?

EDWINA BARTHOLOMEW:

It's a pretty good pitch.

DAVD WOIWOD:

Yeah, those interstate police forces are now on notice. Premier, just quickly on the Brisbane Olympics in 2032. Look, Gold Coast Mayor, Tom Tate, has launched a bid to try and steal some of the events for the glitter strip. Would you support spreading the Games across the two cities?

PREMIER:

Well, he's very cheeky. That's why we like him. We need to spread the Games across the state and there's no doubt that Brisbane is the host city. But if you're going to do it properly, we have to have events right across the state. And I'm talking about regional areas in the north of the state and even indeed in the west. We've got to make sure that every Queenslander sees some value in this. It is an opportunity, if we get this right, to create generational infrastructure for the state. And I want to see as part of it a 20 year tourism plan. So when the eyes of the world are on us, let's develop the product in the next eight years. And then when the eyes of the world are on us, let's promote Queensland as a place to do business, to holiday and even to come and live. And it really is, we have a golden opportunity in this state, and we're determined to get it right. And the 2032 with the Olympic and Paralympic Games, that's just a point. But that gives us that window to be able to go forward and do what we have to do for the state. But it does, it has to be for every part of Queensland, not just for Brisbane.

EDWINA BARTHOLOMEW:

Yeah, it'd be cool to see some events out in Mount Isa, all over the state. You know, up at the top of the Cape. It'd be great to actually see the spread across Queensland. And perhaps Tom Tate's cheekiness has paid off by the sounds of it. Thank you so much, Premier. And again, happy new year and thanks for joining us this morning on Sunrise.

[ENDS]

Event: Press conference

Speaker/s: Premier David Crisafulli
Health Minister Tim Nicholls

Airdate: 16 January 2025, 9:30am approx.

Duration: 40mins

E&OE

PREMIER:

...had been prosecuted for a long time. Things the former government said weren't the case have now been verified to be true by one of the most independent people in the parliament, the Auditor General. My role today is to explain why there will be change, and I want Queenslanders to understand how seriously we view what has been raised in this report and what we will be doing in the weeks, months and years ahead, to turn around the broken system.

The report speaks of maintenance backlog, staff being undervalued and under resourced. It speaks of the worst wait times across the two most important categories for nine years. It paints the tale of a broken system.

In order to heal the Queensland health crisis, we have to start by acknowledging it, and this report forms the basis to do that, in the work that Tim will do, and I have to acknowledge the work that Tim has done in a short period of time, in firstly, making sure that there's been dialog with every single one of those HHS's to explain our clear view of the need to put those doctors and nurses back in charge. And the work that we'll be doing around the real time health data will shine a light on that system, and it will show where resources need to be spent. It will also provide a point of accountability. And what I have seen in the early days is a system that is responding, a system that is responding to the knowledge that help is on its way.

I want to reaffirm the commitments we made, and to assure Queenslanders on the other side of the election that those commitments will be honoured. There were two key areas that I said we intend to be held accountable to. The first is stabilising the wait times, and that work is well and truly underway, and that work will be done this year. We cannot continue to see the surgery wait lists blowing out year on year, and that will be stabilised. The second was to reduce ambulance ramping to under 30 per cent by the end of 2028 and I reaffirmed the commitment that that is going to happen, and the way it is going to happen is to make sure that those resources hit the front line. The way it is going to happen is to make sure the programs we spoke about will be implemented now, separately to that, this report highlights the need for a severe re-look at the way that we do maintenance in this state, and that starts with the transparency and the money needed to be able to turn that those problems around. If we don't maintain the assets we have, it will cost Queenslanders far more in the years ahead, and Tim will be speaking a little more about some of those challenges.

I just want to reiterate to Queenslanders; we acknowledge the state of the Queensland health crisis. We acknowledge the work of the staff in trying to hold a broken system together, and we are committed to making the cultural changes and to put the funding where it needs to be, to ensure that Auditor General reports like this are listened to and can be the benchmark to turn things around in the years ahead. Thanks, Tim.

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Tim Nicholls, Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Good morning, everyone. Well, look, this is one of the most scathing Auditor General reports I have seen in 18 years in the parliament. This report bells the cat on Labor's total failure to manage the health system for the better part of a decade. It highlights the scale of the crisis the Queensland Health system faces itself in and it highlights that Labor left a system that was on life support.

It is a system that is holding together mainly through the hard work and the effort of the Queensland Health employees, but not through any great design of the Labor Party. And all of the people who are responsible for this are still in the Queensland Parliament. Now we have to fix the problem. And we said during the election campaign that we would diagnose, we would treat, and then we would cure. And the Auditor General's report is part of the diagnosis of the problem, the diabolical state that the Labor Party has left Queensland's health system in, and we've already started taking action to fix that up.

I've already visited over 36 facilities, and it doesn't matter whether it's been in Rockhampton, where I've stood there and looked at 32 people waiting on the ramp and getting into 17 beds and the ambulance service standing in the air lock and working out of a donger in the car park. Or whether it's been in Townsville, where people are sitting in the waiting room, waiting to be treated for emergency, or whether it's been at Ipswich, where the list and the line of ambulances has been going out the car park. Work needs to be done. So we are diagnosing the problem. I am speaking to clinicians on the front line and getting their ideas and feeding them into the system.

We're also taking action in relation to real time data. And as you know, we'll be releasing the information and real time data within 100 days, as we committed to doing. So we'll be renaming the satellite hospitals as we said we would. And concerningly, the Queensland Auditor Office has indicated over 3000 examples of category one and category two patients who have turned up at satellite hospitals believing they were going to get emergency care, and they've turned up at the wrong place they should have been going to the EDs. But more importantly, now what we're finding out is the true state of the crisis that's been left here. This report has uncovered hospital projects over budget, and it shows insufficient, insufficient expenditure for fixing the problems we've got, and important things. This isn't just about putting a sign up or painting a waiting room. This is about delivering things like cancer care services at Metro South, where systems that have been needing repair and should have had their money spent on them haven't been and so there have been almost 30 instances of people wanting cancer care and not being able to get it because the system fails. It's about providing pure, clean, fresh water in places like Longreach, and it's about making sure our air conditioning systems are working so that disease can't spread through the system, and the proper heating, ventilation and air conditioning controls are in place so that mould doesn't

grow in hospital theatres. This is about saving lives, and this is where Labor have failed, and they have failed to the tune of almost \$2 billion and that's a massive amount of money.

What Labor have been doing is they have been robbing Peter to pay Paul. They've been covering up and fudging the system, and they've been saying they're going to spend money on one thing and spending it on another. Well, we're going to stop that. We're going to make sure that every cent in the health budget that is allocated is spent on the right things. It's spent on the right things at the right time, and it's done when it's needed to be done. But it's not going to be done overnight.

Ten years of maladministration and of failure can't be fixed in less than 90 days, but it will only be fixed if you recognise the extent of the problem, if you diagnose the problem first and then set about putting in place the treatment and the cure, and that's what we're all about today. So there are a number of number of things that this report highlights, for example, on ramping. And we heard this during the 39 town halls that we conducted during the course of the lead up to the last election. We heard about ramping. We heard about loved ones being lost because of ambulance ramping. Well, we know that ramping was the worst on record, at 44.7 per cent and we know it's been the worst ramping rate in Australia. And this report highlights it's been going that way for 10 years.

Ten years there has been an increase in the ramping rate people not being seen in time. The report reveals that the ambulances spent 157,602 hours ramped outside emergency departments. That seems like a big number, but let's put it in some sort of perspective. That's 18 years. That's the length of time I've been in Parliament. That's the amount of time that was lost by ambulances waiting to discharge patients. We've seen that outpatient appointments, the elective surgery wait list has grown by a third over that 15-years, so that it's now 64,171 and our commitment is to stabilise that by October 2025 this year. We're getting on with that job.

We saw the story about satellite hospital renaming, and as he indicated to you, the audit office reports the need to make the change, because over 3500 patients with immediately or imminently life-threatening conditions presented at those satellite hospitals last year thinking they were going to get treatment when it wasn't available.

And the big one, of course, that's come out is in relation to the asset maintenance, looking after what you've got. And as the number of facilities, we've had has gone from a value of around about eight and a half billion dollars to \$30 billion Labor failed to put the money in to keep it up to scratch, to maintain it, and they left \$2 billion worth of repair bills that Queenslanders are going to have to pay for. And this is not new. For the last four years, the Queensland Audit Office has been pointing this out to Labor, and they make the point again today or yesterday in the audit report that they highlighted the failure to put funds to look after our existing buildings, our existing facilities, into the budget and spend it and spend it carefully.

I've highlighted some of the some of the issues that that means, air conditioning and ventilation at St George has now reached its end of life, and what a surprise. It's only been in there since 1975.

Radiation oncology health technology at Metro South that reached its end of life in 2023, broken down 32 times in the past 12 months. The reverse osmosis units at the Children's Health and Central Queensland, these are the things that provide pure water for operating theatres, are now not working and breaking down. Medical gas installations for anaesthesiology at various sites throughout Central Queensland in our so important regions that have been neglected by Labor are not reaching Australian standards anymore.

And even things like concrete at Darling Downs not meeting the standard, so the buildings are starting to fall around, literally crumble around the patients.

So what we're seeing today with the Queensland Audit Office is the latest story of Labor's neglect. It's a neglect that's been allowed to go for too long, but it's a neglect that we won't allow to go any longer. And you might say, well, what are you going to do about it? Well, the first thing, as I've said, is that we are going to acknowledge the extent of the problem.

We're going to stop moving money around and robbing Peter to pay Paul. We will spend every cent of the maintenance budget on what it should be spent on, and that's maintenance, making sure that we are looking after the facilities we've already got. It's going to take some time to deal with the backlog, but we can't allow it to get any worse. We're going to start listening to our clinicians, as I've already indicated that I've been doing, get their feedback on what the most important things are that need to be fixed, and start directing the funds into those areas. And I've already spoken to Mr. Sam Sangster, who is conducting the hospital expansion program review, and he is including a review of the sustaining capital program now in the report that he will be providing to the government. So he will be giving us information about where that stands and the best way forward, that he believes we can go with that program as well.

So we are taking action to make sure that we know what the problem is, and that we have a plan to calmly and methodically address that issue by making sure we spend the money that we have in the best way possible to get the best value for taxpayers. And I'm going to be and I'm sorry, Premier and Treasurer, going into bat to make sure that we do have the funds so that we can catch up on some of these programs. But it won't happen overnight. It's going to be a big task. You don't turn around 10 years of neglect overnight, but if you don't start, it'll never happen. And this Queensland Audit Office report, together with what we've heard from our town halls, together with what we've learned since coming to office in the last 85 days, have all strengthened our resolve to diagnose, to treat and to cure the health crisis that is prevalent through Queensland and today's report, yesterday's report from the Auditor General, is a very clear guideline and signpost to the way ahead. And I just want to reiterate what the Premier said.

The hard working staff of Queensland Health have held a creaky, leaky system together for far too long without the support of the government, and I want them to know that we have heard and understand the difficulties they face, and we want to work with you, and we want to deliver a health system that delivers the best health system we can for Queenslanders, whether it's from Currumbin to the Cape or Brisbane to Bedourie and beyond. We are going to deliver those services. We're going to work with you to turn around this very, very leaky Health Department ship of [inaudible].

REPORTER:

[inaudible] as Treasurer.

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Yes.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] the government [inaudible]?

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Look, I think that's a reasonable question to ask, and yes, certainly we, we will be going in to ask for funding increases. The Queensland Audit Office report indicates that the previous government didn't listen to the Health Department when it came to those matters. All governments have the problem of a huge demand and limited resources, and I know I've previously spoken to the Premier and the Treasurer about this, about the need for those extra resources. Those are discussions that we'll have going into cabinet. What I want to really emphasise is the fact is that what has happened, and what the Audit Office has indicated, is that the money that's been set aside each year, \$325 million for these programs, wasn't actually spent on these programs. And as I understand it, for the forward years, the money that has been set aside, that is the \$325 million which hasn't increased since 2011 has been spent already. So the money that's been allocated for the out years has already been brought forward to pay for other parts of the budget. So we're going to have to go back in and reset that.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] data [inaudible]

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Yeah, I haven't got the numbers. I thought that might be something. I haven't got the numbers on the wait list and those sorts of things. Every quarter we put up numbers, and I'm not sure whether those numbers are in our quarterly reporting that go up there. That's certainly something I'm happy to look at.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Sorry?

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Sure, yeah, looks like that's something I'm very happy to look at. Yeah.

REPORTER:

The report noted that there was a 13 per cent increase in the demand on Eds, do you acknowledge that the government did have a task at hand, that it was really struggling and trying to facilitate that demand?

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

What I think the report really shows is that this is not something that only happened last year or the year before. This has been happening for a decade. The case that you like is being put forward as if this took everyone by surprise as a total furphy. The report shows that the increase in hospital ramping has been going on since 2015-2016. A competent government plans for growth. A competent government says we know how much this is going to grow, and we need to start doing things about it. We had an incompetent government that was more interested in how things look than how they are, and that wasn't interested in making sure that the money that was available was spent on the right things. And that has been the real issue. There will always be growth. There has been growth in the Queensland Health budget every year. There has to be population increases. Costs increase. Those all happen, but what they've failed to do is make sure that they've spent the money in the right way, and that they've delivered a system that actually addresses the problems, the problems with bed block, the problems with long stay older patients, the problems with making sure that some of these hospitals have sufficient room and capacity. If you go to Rocky, I've been to Rocky. That hasn't changed, the emergency department there has barely changed in a decade. And the clinicians are paying the price, but even more importantly, Queenslanders in Central Queensland are paying the price because they can't get treated when they turn up in a hospital. So yes, it's been increasing, but a competent government would say, yes, we know it's increasing, and you know what, we're going to do something about it. And there's been a failure to do that and that's what this report shows. Whether it is in making sure that the cancer technology services at Metro South are up to date, because that's not an unknown thing. They have lifespans, and the lifespan is mapped out, and they say this needs to be replaced in 2023. Well, did they plan for that to be replaced in 2023 or do they just sort of try and pull the wool over everyone's eyes and say, no, we don't need to do it? They knew the end was coming, and they failed to plan and spend the money for it. That's the failure, and that's why the system is on life support now, and so what's happening is the clinicians are being left there, having to explain to patients why the technology is not working when it had a known end date and it hasn't been replaced. That's why the system is on life support. That's why we have to start taking action. But it's going to take some time. We're being upfront with people about that. But if we don't start now, if we keep going the way the Labor Party left it, it'd never get done.

REPORTER:

So since last year's state budget, the health funding was 11.7 per cent higher than the prior year. Do you have a target of how much percentage increase in funding the health system needs?

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Yeah, so that 11.4 per cent but it's only it was only about 3 per cent below CPI, higher than was actually needed during the year. So just that, just highlights the extent of the underfunding that occurred in the health system. So the hospitals actually only got a 3 per cent increase over what they were doing. Yes, the funding was higher, but in the time that it was there, the actual amount that the hospitals got was only 3 per cent higher. So that was barely level pegging with CPI and particularly in medicine, in medicine, the cost is of equipment, the cost of technology, the cost of all the ancillaries that go into it, increases at a higher rate. So we're having a really good look at that in our discussions now with our health plan about what a sensible and sustainable level of funding will be. And we're in negotiations with the health and hospital services about what they would like to see right now. I was in Townsville yesterday, Cairns yesterday, Townsville the day before meeting with chief executives and board chairs to understand what their real needs are. And once we've got that baseline, we'll be able to come back and understand exactly what they will require over the coming years. So yes, we're alert to it, and yes, we know that the hospital and health services who are delivering the services need more funding.

REPORTER:

What's the total health budget currently?

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

Sorry?

REPORTER:

What's the total health budget currently?

MINISTER NICHOLLS:

So currently, we're just over \$30 billion and that is about a third of the budget. Health is the biggest service delivery department in the government, and it swallows about a third of the Queensland State budget, and employs 130,000 people, 110,000 FTEs, and it's currently consuming, you know, a very substantial amount of funds. So we need to make sure that the money that taxpayers give us is spent wisely and is spent on delivering the services that those taxpayers are going to be using and expect to be able to use.

REPORTER:

Premier, just on some other matters. We've been told that [inaudible] discussions with the government...

PREMIER:

Sorry, what was that?

REPORTER:

We've been told that Star has been in discussions with the government. What have those discussions been about? And did they approach you for help?

PREMIER:

I'm just going to reiterate my position of the last few days, and that is, it's up to the company to make a, to make its statement about its viability. That, that's... I'm not going to, I'm not going to, one way or another, suggest to you about the viability of that entity. That's up to them. I just reiterate my position, and we have only one focus, and that is the continuity of it, of that operation as a casino, and to make sure that the people employed there today will be there tomorrow and next week and beyond.

REPORTER:

What does that mean practically? You keep talking about supporting the workers and making sure Queen's Wharf is open, what does that look like?

PREMIER:

It looks like whatever, whatever the ownership is, that, that not only that it maintains its licence to continue, but that it does indefinitely throughout whatever the ownership period is. And again, I'm not suggesting you there will be a change of ownership. I'm, I'm not, not flagging that in any way, shape or form. That's up to the company to, to discuss if at all, right, if that, that is the position. But we'll use every, we'll use every lever we have, every bit of influence we have, to make sure that whoever owns that there is only one priority for the Queensland Government, and that is the priority of the workers. And I have every faith that whatever the future of the entity looks like, if there is any change, but whatever the future of the entity looks like, I have every faith that it's an asset for not just the city but the state. And I have every faith that it can be a viable concern into the future, and it can employ the many thousands of Queenslanders who rely on it. And my overwhelming desire is to see the precinct deliver what Queenslanders were promised. And when everything, when, when this moves on into the future, the analysis we'll be putting is to make sure that the original promises that were made are fulfilled. Because that will create the jobs that we were initially promised across, you know, more jobs in construction and more ongoing jobs as well.

REPORTER:

Would you be open to 100 per cent foreign ownership?

PREMIER:

I'm not commenting on the future of Star.

REPORTER:

Premier, it's losing about \$30 million a month. So in two months, it's due to be, to collapse.

PREMIER:

Well, that's a matter for the company to tell you, and to tell the market. What my job is to tell the workers who are there that we are determined to make sure that they have a future, and to tell Queenslanders that their dollars will always be respected and valued and our focus remains on the staff who are there. And I come back to what I've said before, my interest is not around the corporate suits sitting around those board tables, it's around the workers sitting

around the gaming table. And they will have a future, and they must, and that's our non-negotiable into the future, whatever that looks like.

REPORTER:

So Premier, you can't rule out 100 per cent foreign ownership?

PREMIER:

I'm not discussing the future of that. I'm not discussing any future ownership models, because I'm not in any way signaling the future of the current provider. But if you're asking me about what I want to see for that precinct, whoever owns it, if there is a change at all, but whoever owns it has to make sure that the workers who are there continue to be the workers into the future, and that the operation continues. And in time, that the original commitments that were made are fulfilled. Because the dream that was sold to Queenslanders was of a thriving precinct, not just, not just about the gambling component. It was about a more broader, thriving precinct, and that's where I see the long term economic uplift. That's where I see the cultural change that can occur. And that's why that was the initial reason behind the entire process over a decade ago.

REPORTER:

Premier, [inaudible] Queensland Health are due to reach...

PREMIER:

Sorry, Alex, [inaudible]

REPORTER:

Premier, almost 40 per cent of building owned by Queensland Health are due to reach their life in the next 10 years.

PREMIER:

Yeah.

REPORTER:

The report noticed that the significant pressure on cost, labour, et cetera.

PREMIER:

Yeah.

REPORTER:

Currently, that's something that would intensify.

PREMIER:

True.

REPORTER:

How do you manage those competing interests while also bringing down debt levels?

PREMIER:

Yeah, it's a good question. It starts with making sure the money that's been set aside for maintenance actually gets used for maintenance. That's a good starting point. Being open and honest about it. The other thing that Tim has to do, and he's mentioned already, those discussions are underway, but we have to be realistic about where's the best use of that maintenance money, the money that is there. Tim will go and fight for more. That's what all good ministers do. But the money that is there already, we have to have a proper analysis about where it's being spent. At the moment to not even be spending it when there are buildings quite literally falling around, well, that's, that's just really bad, bad management and that won't occur. And my first commitment, I can promise Queensland, is every single cent of that maintenance budget will be spent on maintaining the busi... those, those assets. That's a that's a non-negotiable. But we also have to have a look at what is the best use immediately to ensure that the assets we have and those valuable assets can be used for, for their life and beyond, because there is a cliff coming. And unless we address it, and unless we start turning the tide on thinking that maintenance is an afterthought, it literally can cost people their lives. And Tim outlined the Cancer Centre. That's a prime example. If you don't maintain assets, that leads to the likelihood of that not being there into the future, and then long term, that means that people don't get access to health care, and health care is a matter of life or death.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] revealed last night that the 13 year old boy accused of the Yamanto stabbing was on bail at the time following [inaudible] youth worker. What's your reaction?

PREMIER:

How about I make some generic comments without speaking individually about this case. There is no doubt that there needs to be further reform on the broken youth justice system in this state, and we stand ready to do that. Now, to date we've fulfilled what we told Queenslanders we would do, and to unpack that we spoke about the focus of those five key areas in the initial changes. The Making Queensland Safer laws, and we said there'd be laws by Christmas. We then said we'd have an independent panel tasked with reviewing future law changes in a calm and methodical way. And my commitment to you remains that will be in place before the parliament resumes. And then third element is to make sure that we drive those changes and then have a look at where further gaps are. And we have to do that. And what, what I, what I witnessed in recent years was rather an acknowledgement that changes broke the system, the former government tried to tell Queenslanders there wasn't an issue with youth crime when everybody was living it. So what I'm going to tell Queenslanders is we will make changes to the act and where it needs further changes, you bet we will. And I want Queenslanders to know we're serious about this. And I said at the start... just, if I may. I said at the start that it wouldn't be one set of changes. I said there would be many, and we will continue to do that, but ultimately there'll be fewer victims. And there will, you'll never have a situation where there isn't crime, and you'll never have a situation where people don't feel justifiably a little disappointed in when there's some sentences. But my commitment is we've given every opportunity to make sure that we drive those victim numbers down, and that is what we will achieve. And I'm very confident that the changes we speak about to

stronger laws, the changes we speak about to early intervention, to rehabilitation across the system will make for a safer Queensland. Sorry, Maddie, I'll go Lydia.

REPORTER:

So you spoke yesterday [inaudible] what you said you would do.

PREMIER:

Yeah.

REPORTER:

What you said you would do was pass laws that would make Adult Time for Adult Crime.

PREMIER:

Yeah.

REPORTER:

Hasn't for attempted murder. Do you not think attempted murder an adult crime?

PREMIER:

We listed, we listed the areas. You can, you can go back. We listed the areas that we said we would change, and then we said there would be future changes, and there would be a panel to decide what that looks like. So I, you know, there are people who might dispute, might disagree with, with, with the changes on both sides of the spectrum. I respect that, but we campaigned on that. Even the timeline. I even said to you what those offences would be, and I mentioned that they would go to a committee for a two week period and be passed by the end of the year. So it was pretty transparent and, and as is the next wave of that. And I want Queenslanders to know that there will be further changes this calendar year, and there will be further changes beyond that. And for as long as I'm in this job, we will be looking at legislation and working out ways that it can be better to protect more Queenslanders and have fewer victims. Matt, Matt, Matt, and I'll go to you Madura, but Matt.

REPORTER:

Premier, 10 News revealed last that Ashley Paul Griffith, the convicted paedophile is appealing his life sentence. I know you can't speak too much on it, but just overall, I guess your reaction to it.

PREMIER:

Well, it's horrendous. And when parents send their kids off, they want them to be safe, and that was an abhorrent breach of trust. And we will be defending our position forcefully. And I might leave it there.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] given that this will take some time to go to the courts?

PREMIER:

You bet it will. It was that was in abhorrent breach of trust. Madura?

REPORTER:

How will the initial offences for Adult Crime, Adult Time chosen?

PREMIER:

By listening to people like Voice to Victims, by listening to experts who work in Child Safety, and by being honest and open with Queenslanders, and we said that we would fulfill those as we did in the timeline we did. And I did flag at the time that there would be further reforms, and I even mentioned the expert panel. And so if you asking whether or not we look forward to rolling up our sleeves and going to work and improving that system, you bet. And I, that's across the board. And you know, in recent days, we've, we've heard some commentary around the knife laws, and we've already spoken about one element of those changes, and we also did before the election, and that is to remove the sunset clause on Jack's Law. I never understood why it needed a sunset clause, that's going to be removed. But if there needs to be further tightening of those knife laws, that will also be part of that review of that expert panel. We are not going to stop until we create the best youth crime legislation in the country and there are fewer victims. And that's the barometer of success.

REPORTER:

Is the resi care system creating this generation of untouchables?

PREMIER:

[inaudible]

REPORTER:

Is the resi care system creating this generation of untouchables?

PREMIER:

Residential care is broken. Now, I don't want to, I don't want to suggest that it's the source of all the problems, because ultimately, kids run off the rails from, can run off the rails from all sorts of backgrounds, right. So I don't want to cast put a net across the system. And not all kids in resi care are bad kids either. There's, there's some kids in there who, you know, who go on to great things in their life. But in general, but as a general comment about residential care, we never even knew the number of kids in residential care until the new minister asked the question and made that transparent. And there's nearly 2100 and I look at what happens in there, and I see those kids not have access to the things that many other kids do, and we are setting them up for failure. So we spoke before the election about the need to not just inject some money into the system, but change the way it works. So in the future, there'll be a dual carer model, and that will start, that ratchet it up as a percentage across, across the term and beyond. But our vision is eventually to have an entire system where there's a dual carer model for greater visibility and also greater structure. We're going to embark on delivering the secure care facility for residential care that was instructed in 2013 as part of a report into how broken that system was and was never delivered. So that's over a decade ago. And we are serious about making sure that the kids in that system have the ability to turn their life

around. But there also needs to be discipline and structure in that system, and at the moment, it's far from that. It is a broken system, and it needs to do two things. One is give every opportunity for a kid in there to turn their life around and move on to other things like foster care and adoption, by the way, but it also needs to be a system that keeps the broader community safe. And I'm not convinced at the moment that residential care in its current format is helping either the kids turn their life around or keep the community safe. And there will be changes and I can assure Queenslanders of that.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] Ashley Paul Griffith. The government's family... you know, the QFFC...

PREMIER:

The Families Commissioner, yeah.

REPORTER:

Luke Twyford's review into the [inaudible]...

PREMIER:

Yeah.

REPORTER:

That review is also going to look specifically how he was able to abuse all these children for two decades. How does this appeal play into the review? Will the review have to be delayed? Will the terms of reference need to be changed?

PREMIER:

Excellent question that I don't want the review to be delayed because there are some issues, including with blue cards that have to be reviewed. Now, clearly this appeal will bring some complexities into the into that case, but I'm I still remain committed to doing that review because I don't think we can wait and leave the system without putting a spotlight over it. And I think Mr Twyford is, is the right person to be able to manoeuvre the way through that complexity. Josh. Josh. Josh.

REPORTER:

Brisbane motorists are paying the most in the country. The RACQ, for fuel that is, the RACQ is again calling for a cap of five cents for a daily rise in fuel prices. Would the government consider that?

PREMIER:

We would consider it. We've asked, I've asked Cabinet and, because it goes across a few ministries, but I've, I want to have a look at the where that system has been rolled out. I believe it's in the West it's been, been done. There are mixed reports about how effective that is, but it's something that we owe to Queenslanders to look at. But we also owe to Queenslanders to do everything we can to drive down their cost of living across the board. Now, in the case of fuel, there needs to be a review of the planning system to give every

opportunity to make sure that there is more competition, which I'm not convinced has been as effective as it could. I'm certainly not embarking on state owned service stations. That was a little kooky. I'm talking about making sure there's every opportunity for more competition in the market. And there are different things that, at a high level, we can do. But overwhelmingly, we have to find the levers we can pull on cost of living, and one of them is making sure that we get our road network working better so people spend less time in a car park instead of instead of driving to and from home. In rural , in the case of rural roads and dealing with the issue of the standard of those roads, which can also mean that it's costing people more to get to and from work. So they're the levers we can pull, as well as the overall cost of living, doing things on time and on budget, trying to find every way to help Queenslanders. In answer to your initial question, it is something we are reviewing. There are mixed reports, but we'll do everything we can to try and find a system that can lower people's cost of living and fuel is one of those things that are really biting Queenslanders at the moment.

REPORTER:

Have you sought or will you seek to [inaudible]?

PREMIER:

I'll talk to you about that in a moment.

REPORTER:

Premier, since October, you've found out about many billions of dollars of black holes in the Queensland budget. Clearly savings and revenue needs to be made. How are you going to do that without increasing or new taxes, or cutting services?

PREMIER:

Well, we've had a pretty good crack already. Harry. We said that we're not going to embark on a \$37 billion wrecking ball through the economy, which is called the Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro. We've called time on Labor's dodgy deal with the CFMEU, which was literally costing billions of dollars. We've spoken about an empowered public service where we don't have the days of just farming out to third party consultants become a thing of the past. You know, I'd suggest to you that's, that's a reasonable opening session.

REPORTER:

Premier, you opened up the Children's Court to the media which we can access those proceedings, but it doesn't extend to children's documents which reveal things like criminal histories. Is there any desire to extend that?

PREMIER:

Yeah, I saw the reporting of that in the last couple of days. Our, our decision to open up the courts is because we believe that transparency needs to be seen on behalf of Queenslanders, and I would like to see a system where reporting is able to be done free from identification of young people, of course, but where reporting is able to be done and justice is seen to be done. And I would like to think that in the spirit of the legislation, that we have every opportunity

to shine a light on the system, and if further reform needs to be done to ensure that reporting is able to give a true reflection on why a sentence is imposed, I can't see that as anything but a good thing for Queenslanders, but also the judiciary. More information means that there can be more understanding about decisions, and ultimately, we want decisions that reflect community values. Thanks a lot.

[ENDS]

Released under RTI - DPC

Station: ABC North West Qld
Program: Breakfast
Compere: Zara Margolis
Interviewee: Premier David Crisafulli
Date: 17 January 2025, 7:24am approx.
Duration: 6mins 20sec

E&OE

ZARA MARGOLIS:

Premier David Crisafulli let's try that again. Are you there, Premier?

PREMIER:

Yeah, good morning. How are you? Can you hear me now?

ZARA MARGOLIS:

I can, thank you so much. What brings you to Mount Isa in the North West today?

PREMIER:

Well, thanks for having me. I wanted to come out early in my time as Premier to make sure that every part of the state knows that they matter. It's easy to get bunkered down at the other end of the state, but it's, there's a lot happening here in the Isa at the moment. And there's some big challenges ahead and I think it's important that I come and see them firsthand and put the shoulder to the wheel and try and get cracking on them.

ZARA MARGOLIS:

Yeah. Key among those challenges, Premier, definitely in the next few months will be the winding down of Glencore's underground copper smelter, impacting potentially 1200 jobs. How can your government help?

PREMIER:

It's a big challenge, but we can't sit by and say there's... that we can just allow it to happen without having a red hot crack at finding a way to make sure that our operations continue. Our new Minister for Mines, Dale Last, has spent a lot of time working on it. I've met the company myself already, and Dale's had quite a few meetings. I spoke yesterday when I got in with your local member, Robbie Katter, as well about it. I think everyone's on a unity ticket to try and do something. Ultimately, we can't let a proud community that's relied on that asset for so long just to allow it to just go by the wayside. We have to find a way to have continuity of operations while we look at other opportunities into the future. So that means everyone's got to get around the table, and we have to lead those negotiations. And work's

underway. So, you know, I'm not for one moment suggesting there's a silver bullet but just allowing things to be mothballed and moving on, I just don't think is an option.

ZARA MARGOLIS:

The town certainly very worried. You can almost feel it. I'm not quite sure if you've had that sense as well, Premier, in town, where whatever happens with Glencore, whether it continues or not, this is going to impact Mount Isa. Potentially population could, I know there's been talks of halving in the next few years. What can your government do about that? You said Glencore directly, but there's so many other ways that this is going to impact the future of the city.

PREMIER:

There is, which is why we've got to find ways to make sure that we find new opportunities for the region as well. But I don't think that can be at the expense of waving the white flag on, the future of the mine. I just don't, I just don't think we can just wave the white flag and say it's over. So, it was one of the first meetings that Dale took. And I do think there's an opportunity, and I do think there's a way that we can have operations in some form continue. And, I think that involves a bit of maturity on the part of Glencore. I think it also involves making sure that there is a long term options to find new ways to keep, to keep that, the facility running. But I, you know, there was a lot of talk six months ago about small projects which of course are valuable for any community, but I think short term projects run a distant second to finding long term operations. And this city has been built on the back of generations of investment in that, in that facility. And I just can't accept that we can get to a point that we say it's over. And I don't think the community accepts that either. So I'm not promising a silver bullet, but I can assure you we won't be just walking away and saying, there's, there's nothing we can do, because ultimately we have to lead those negotiations and try and find a way through.

ZARA MARGOLIS:

It's three minutes to local news on ABC North West. Premier, you talk about those long term approaches in Mount Isa desperate for another industry to kind of absorb some of these losses. A correctional facility is something that has been floated about recently, but also plenty of times in the past. Is that something that's come across your desk? Would you support that?

PREMIER:

Well, I'm on, I'm on the way to meet your council. I know your mayor is very keen on that. She's raised that with me already. I'm not going to close our eyes to any opportunity, but I just want to be clear to people listening to this. That doesn't mean that we don't believe there's a future in the town for the existing operations as well. So yes, we need to look at new opportunities, of course. Yes, we have to make sure that, that there are continuity of, of things and expansions of things that have been in this town and government services is one of them and should always be one of them. This is one of the thriving western, western cities in what is the most decentralised state in the nation. But I'm not going to say in one moment that means we just wave the white flag, as I think there's been some approach taken in recent

months from other people in the capital. I don't accept that. I'm not promising a silver bullet today, but I'm promising not to just give up. And I think this place has got a bright future.

ZARA MARGOLIS:

I have to go to local news in a moment, Premier, but youth crime that's on your agenda today.

PREMIER:

It is. I'm going to spend a couple of hours with the police today. I'm meeting Cloncurry Mayor now, Greg Campbell. Then I'm going to see council. But I am going to spend a couple of hours with the police, and I want residents in the city to know that the unlawful behaviour that we're seeing at the moment can't continue. I got approached a couple of times last night, you know, people telling me stories about having rocks hurled at them and abuse. We are in a youth crime crisis in this state and I want every Queenslanders to know I'm serious about dealing with it. We've put forward the first change of legislation. More will come, and I said that from day one. We are going to keep changing that Youth Justice Act until we get it right. And as for police, they're going to have the resources to do their job and we are going to bolster that thin blue line that keeps getting thinner. That is my commitment to Queenslanders.

ZARA MARGOLIS:

Premier Crisafulli, when might we see you back with so many changes ahead?

PREMIER:

We... I want to make sure that I'm no stranger to every part of the state. And it is a big state, but I hope that the fact that I'm here within 100 days tells people that I...

[ABC NEWS HEADLINES CUT IN]

[ENDS]

Event: Press conference

Speaker/s: Premier David Crisafulli
Attorney-General Deb Frecklington
Child Death Review Board Chair Luke Twyford

Airdate: 21 January 2025, 11:30am approx.

Duration: 40mins

E&OE

PREMIER:

... it's important for the most vulnerable in our society. And we are going to continue every day of our government to make sure that our focus is on ensuring that people are safe, whether that be at home, at work, at a daycare or a kindy in their streets, every thing we do is about improving community safety for Queenslanders.

Today, I can announce we are launching an inquiry into the broken child protection system in this state. A system that we have spoken about for a long time, a system that we if you go back some of our comments regarding blue cards and the need to ensure that that is a more robust system and enables people who come into action with our most vulnerable to be fit and proper people. And nothing short of getting to the bottom of the broken system will cut it in the eyes of Queenslanders and today we take another step in that journey.

This is fulfilling an election commitment we made, and in a moment, I'll ask the Attorney to speak a little bit more about it. It also follows the horrendous breach of trust that was the situation with Ashley Paul Griffith. A breach of trust that shows how broken the system is, and the need to shine a spotlight to fix it. And today is a step in the journey towards fixing that broken system.

These failures go back many years and whilst we, whilst there's one case in particular that I know you'll, you'll all be very keen to discuss the failures in the child protection system go back many years, and there have been many vulnerable children who have had some of the most horrendous things occur because of that broken system. But when it comes to the case of Ashley Paul Griffith, that was the one that really shocked at home to Queenslanders. It was the most horrific of crimes. It highlighted failures in the system. More of the same isn't going to cut it, and we are taking action. I'll ask the Attorney to say some words.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Thank you very much, Premier. Well, we're here today doing exactly what we said we would do. Now, we said we would do an inquiry into the horrific matter of Ashley Paul Griffiths and the child protection system here in this state. The Blue Card system that has obviously let down many children, many Queensland children and many Queensland parents. So today, we launched the Blue Card inquiry into the child sex exploitation system. This is, like the

Premier has said, one of the most horrendous breaches of trust in the childcare system that this state and in fact, any Australians have ever seen.

And I'm very pleased to be able to announce today that we have Luke Twyford, who is the Chair of the Child Death Review Board, to head up this inquiry. It is important that the Child Death Review Board have the terms of reference to enable them to look into what went wrong, why it went wrong, and how this will never happen again in this great state of ours. It is essential that when parents drop their kids off at childcare or at school, that they know that they are safe, and that is exactly what this review will do and hopefully give confidence back to the parents of Queensland that there is a government in place that have their children as number one here in this state.

Now, years ago, we saw the horrific loss of Tiahleigh Palmer, there was a review into the blue card system by the former Labor government in 2017 which issued 81 recommendations. Now the failures of the former Labor government and the former Labor attorney-generals of D'Ath, Fentiman, then D'Ath again, into implementing those recommendations, have seen why we are here today. That is why it is essential that we have terms of reference for Luke Twyford and the Child Death Review Board to look into what went wrong in in Queensland and what went wrong because of the conduct of Ashley Paul Griffith.

Now we have got the terms of reference, and they'll be available for you, and I know that Luke Twyford will go through that a bit more, but it's important to say that the terms of reference will assist to allow us to look into the laws and the policies and the procedures and practices of what went wrong, what should have happened to enable earlier identification of people putting children in harm's way. It will look into early childhood education, and to police and the Blue Card systems that have operated during the time of Ashley Paul Griffiths offending, and what gaps are in the system and where and how those gaps can be filled. So what I'd like to do now is introduce you to Luke Twyford, and thank him very much for the beginning of this review.

LUKE TWYFORD:

Thank you, Minister, and thank you Premier. It's a great set of responsibilities that I now bear to carry out this review. And I pass on a key message from all Child Death Review Board members that we will take our time to ensure this review is done properly, with the utmost integrity, and to ensure that it produces recommendations that will keep future Queensland children safe. No child should ever experience child sexual abuse, and it's abhorrent that it continues to occur in a modern society.

The Child Death Review Board has special powers to require the production of confidential information and as a first step, I will be seeking information from the Australian Federal Police, Queensland Police Service, and our Department of Education, and that will enable us to produce a chronology of the offending that has occurred, including the places and the employers where failings may need to be looked into. Another key element of the review that I will lead will include the call for submissions from all impacted parties, particularly victims and their families, seeking their views on where policies, procedures, training, legislation and government responses were insufficient or not fast enough for.

This will be a broad ranging review. I am particularly concerned about how we prevent child sexual exploitation in Australia, as well as how we identify, detect and respond to it. Ensuring that our Blue Card system is part of a broader safeguarding system that includes reportable conduct and a child safety standard system, as recommended by the Royal Commission in 2017, is of equal importance to me. I commit to conducting this review with transparency. There will be public information available on the Queensland Family and Child Commission website about status and the progress, and I look forward to briefing you as the process occurs.

REPORTER:

Just on the special powers you were talking about, will there be any sort of protections [inaudible] come forward, will they be given legal protection?

LUKE TWYFORD:

I'm not able to give third parties legal advice, but certainly when I receive information under the *Queensland Family and Child Commission Act*, which is where the Child Death Review Board legislation sits, I am able to protect the confidentiality of that information and not expose that provider to other parties unless legally compelled to do so.

REPORTER:

I guess it's been considered, but the appeal by Griffith won't impede any operation of this investigation?

LUKE TWYFORD:

That's correct. We are very clear and very certain that we will not continue this review or elements of this review if we ever have a sense or receive advice that it will jeopardise the prosecution or appeal process for the person involved. I have a close working relationship with the Director of Public Prosecutions and given that the terms of reference are focused on identifying system, policy, practice and legislative improvements needed, I have confidence to commence this review today and to continue it.

REPORTER:

How long will it take you to complete?

LUKE TWYFORD:

It's a good question. I want to be very clear that we will take the necessary time to do this properly. I want to ensure that we are engaged with international experts as well as national experts. I believe that it can be completed within the course of this year, but I'll be providing regular updates on its status.

REPORTER:

The bulk of child sexual abuse takes place in the home, by a member of the family. Will you be able to investigate that?

LUKE TWYFORD:

So as part of this review, we do want to look at, particularly the Australian Child Maltreatment study that was released two years ago, looking at the prevalence of child sexual abuse. Absolutely, I want to produce a report that identifies how Australia and particularly Queensland can prevent child sexual abuse. That will be part of that terms of relevance.

REPORTER:

Will your review look specifically at the Griffith case?

LUKE TWYFORD:

Yeah.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

LUKE TWYFORD:

Absolutely. So, we are looking at the established facts that are in the public domain, and particularly in the court domain, to prepare a chronology of what has occurred and to identify system, policies, practices and legislation that might need to be improved.

REPORTER:

In the Tialeigh Palmer case as well? Which the Attorney-General mentioned.

LUKE TWYFORD:

It's a good question. So as part of obviously producing the review we're building upon the knowledge that we're already hold both in Queensland Government, but in particular in the Queensland Family and Child Commission. So setting the background context to the prevalence and rates of child sexual exploitation in Queensland, understanding the policies, procedures and legislation that have changed over time, and questioning whether any of those were insufficient to prevent the offending that has occurred will certainly be part of the review.

REPORTER:

When you said earlier, you seek information from QPS, the AFP, Department of Education that relates to Ashley Paul Griffith?

LUKE TWYFORD:

[inaudible]

REPORTER:

Will you be able to consider implementing, [inaudible] to a Daniels law, the Public Register of child sexual abuse?

LUKE TWYFORD:

Can you repeat the question, sorry, I missed the start?

REPORTER:

Will you be able to consider whether the government ought to create a public register of child sexual abusers as the government response to this?

LUKE TWYFORD:

At this stage, the review is broad ranging. We will look at anything that will prevent, detect, or better respond to the incidents of child sexual abuse.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] obviously, haven't started the review yet, have you have anything in particular you want to look at that you think might have been system gaps that allowed Ashley Paul Griffith to abuse so many people over such a long time?

LUKE TWYFORD:

I think this being day one, it's too early to say that. The terms of reference have been crafted to give us as broad a perspective as possible. And I'll be obviously looking at where we are and where Queensland should be into the future. You will note in one of the final terms of reference, it asks the board to consider as part of this review our current legal framework as it exists today. There were important parts of legislation amended in the final sitting of the last parliament to introduce a reportable conduct scheme and a child safe standard scheme, the *Child Safe Organisations Act*. If that had been implemented earlier, would there have been a different outcome, is a critical question that I want to resolve.

REPORTER:

And the Attorney talked about 81 recommendations from the former review. Do you know how many of them have been acted on? Is it concerning that they haven't all been finalised?

LUKE TWYFORD:

It's absolutely concerning when government receives a report with recommendations that there is not an immediate response, either to accept and outline how they will be implemented or to reject them. To have recommendations sitting in abeyance for multiple years is not the best way to produce sound policy, and it doesn't respect the review process. I am a pragmatic commissioner. I understand I can make recommendations that the government might wish to reject, and all I would ask is they do that transparency. The world is far different to 2017. I think if there are open recommendations from them, this review is a great way to retest whether they are still needed and what implementation needs to occur.

REPORTER:

So there were some that weren't...

LUKE TWYFORD:

Absolutely. There are still open recommendations from the Blue Card review of 2017.

REPORTER:

Will your review go as far as looking into what effect that had on the current situation, not implementing those?

LUKE TWYFORD:

I believe there's... yes, there is a terms of reference that asked me to consider the current legislative policy framework in Queensland today and going back into the period of offended would they have made a difference, as well as what more should be done. If one of those open recommendations falls into what more should have been done, I'll be very clear that that is that key finding of the review.

REPORTER:

Attorney, could you just speak to some of those recommendations and how [inaudible]?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, Lydia, it's a great question, and the Commissioner rightfully says that had of those implemented.... if they had been implemented, would have these matters.... and the reason why we're standing here today with a broken child protection system and Blue Card system in this great state of ours. Would we need to be here today if the former Labor government, three attorney-generals being Attorney-General D'Ath, Fentiman, and then D'Ath again, if they hadn't sat on their hands and they actually had looked at the review that they commissioned themselves? The question must be asked, what failures happened because of the failures of a former Labor government? That is just one of the reasons of this review, but the main reason for this review is to protect children in this state of ours.

As a mum, if you're dropping your or dad or grandparent, if you're dropping your child at a childcare centre or at a school or a place of care, you should understand and know that that child is going to be safe. That is what we've got to get to the bottom of here today, and with their terms of reference that are here. Will we look into the failures of the past government? Well, we need to learn from those failures of that past government. They left, I will get back to you on the number, but I understand there's around 20, if not 30, of those recommendations, of those 81 recommendations that were not completed by the former Labor government.

We stand here today because of the failures of the former Labor government. We've had the failures of the former Labor government that put children at risk in this great state. Now we know about the horrific matter that was Tiahleigh Palmer. We also know about inquiries without teeth into other children in the child protection system under the former Palaszczuk and Miles governments. We know that then the former Labor government didn't act on those recommendations.

What we're doing here today is doing exactly what the Premier said we would do. We would do an inquiry into this horrific matter, and also the child exploitation and what has gone on with the Blue Card system, or the failures of the Blue Card system and the child protection system in this state. We'll look at that, we'll see what needs to be done, and we'll get to work and make sure we protect the children of this state.

REPORTER:

Is there the possibility that charges could arise out of this or is this a more system based investigation?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, look, Josh, the inquiry is certainly a system based inquiry looking into what went wrong, what do we need to do better into the future to protect children. If, if any matters arise through any inquiry that would be subjected to charges needing to be laid, well, of course, they would need to be referred to the police, and they would be laid if required. But what we are looking at here is a horrific matter, a horrific matter of a paedophile who was put in front of children who... that... that is not, that is not in question. Ashley Paul Griffiths is one of the nation's, world's worst paedophiles operating here with children in the state. And that's why we need to have these terms of reference to enable us to have a review that can look into broad ranging topics, to enable that we get to the root of the problem and we keep our children safe.

REPORTER:

Is there going to be a deadline for when this report should be delivered?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, look, as the Commissioner said, he will be given all the time that he is required to get to the bottom of this issue, but we will see a report by the end of the year.

REPORTER:

Will the Commissioner hand the report to government departments or [inaudible] published?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, the Commissioner has talked about through the process, you'll be able to go on his website. And I do thank the Commissioner for being so open and transparent in this regard. We'll be putting information, or the Commissioner will be putting information on that website dedicated to this review, and by the end of the year, we hope to be handed that review, that report.

REPORTER:

Are the nature of police investigations and criminal prosecutions subject to review? Police operations when it comes to...

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, it is as, as the Commissioner said, it is very broad ranging, and his first order of business is to be talking to the police department as well.

REPORTER:

How is this going to interact with federal... Obviously, the federal police are involved in investigations not the Queensland Police. Is that going to complicate how we investigate [inaudible]?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

No, look, it is important that we have cross jurisdictional communications with, with other jurisdictions. The one thing I also can, can say today is that I have asked, and it is being this issue is on the agenda for the next SCAG meeting, which is the Standing Council Of Attorneys General. So that will be happening in late February, where this issue and Queensland's review into child exploitation and the Blue Card failings, or the system failings, is on that agenda, and I look forward to discussing it with my other state counterparts and indeed the Federal Attorney-General. Because what I would like to make sure is that all Attorneys General can enable their departments to cooperate as best they possibly can with the Queensland inquiry.

REPORTER:

Is being run through the Commission's budget? Or are you giving extra money?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Look, this commission of inquiry is being covered by the Department of Justice's budget.

REPORTER:

Why did you pick the Child Death Review Board? Obviously no children are actually dead in this terrible incident. Obviously they're not actually...

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, thank God they're not. Thank God they're not. Some children have died, and the Commissioner has huge years of experience, many years of experience in child exploitation. You only need to look at his CV. You only need to look at the work that the Commissioner has done in the Northern Territory in relation to child exploitation. These learnings and this, you know, this type of background is exactly the type of person we need. Luke Twyford is a man of incredible standing. He's the Chair of the Child Death Review Board, and we need to make sure that no children are harmed. And I think we couldn't have got a better person.

REPORTER:

Given the former government didn't implement all the recommendations, are you saying that you will accept all the recommendations that have come to this inquiry?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, look, what I'm saying about the former government is they failed. The former government failed the children of Queensland. The former government have, it could be said, to have let this issue happen, why we're here today. What we have seen is a former government that failed to act on serious recommendations from previous reviews into protecting children who are the most vulnerable of society. Let's have a look at what the Commissioner hands to government, and we'll know more. This is day one of this inquiry. It is a very good day for Queensland. It is a day that Queensland parents can feel reassured that they have a government with, Premier Crisaf... with Premier Crisafulli and Luke Twyford heading up this, this commission of inquiry to make sure we get to the bottom of what went wrong and how we can fix it into the future.

REPORTER:

Are you saying that the former Labor government is in heart to blame for what Ashley Griffith did?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, let's have a look.

REPORTER:

Premier, can we just get you on a couple of other things?

UNNAMMED SPEAKER:

Is everyone done with the Commissioner?

REPORTER:

I have got two more for Luke.

UNNAMMED SPEAKER:

Is it okay we ask these first, and then, sorry guys, then I'll pull the Commissioner out. Thank you.

REPORTER:

Mr Twyford, thank you. Last year the Child Death Review Board said that our current model of detention is quote, not working as intended and that it is not acceptable for any system to fail in its intent so significantly. That was your quote in the report that was handed down.

LUKE TWYFORD:

It was a quote in the board's report, yes.

REPORTER:

How is the board advising government of what can be done to improve detention for [inaudible]?

LUKE TWYFORD:

So we're, I am working closely with the Director-General of the Youth Justice Department and Minister Gerber in relation to youth justice policy. I can see a number of the board's recommendations, and also I would add recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission, around 12 months post release support, around revisiting early intervention design, best practice funding, going to evidence based justice programs. So I can see that the board's work is leading to policy shifts and policy changes. Certainly, I continue to say that detention is not the most effective way to keep the community safe if we want to rehabilitate young people and make them positive members of our society.

REPORTER:

Our detention centres are at capacity or overrun at the moment. Will the two new that are in the pipeline alleviate that pressure do you believe?

LUKE TWYFORD:

I think you're taking me a distance away from the reason why I'm here today. Each year, I produce a Section 40 report on the performance of both the child protection youth justice system. That's included as part of my annual report, and the most recent one was tabled in Parliament, and includes my analysis of demand flows and capacities.

REPORTER:

There are still recommendations that haven't been, from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses, which is 10 years ago and most recent report seven years ago. There are still recommendations from the inquiry that have not been implemented at a federal level. What hope have you got... I suppose, are you confident that government will actually do it? Will actually implement it this, the things you say?

LUKE TWYFORD:

I have absolute confidence that the government will consider and respond to my report, and I think that's as a regulator, all I can ask is that we undertake a honest process of getting to the bottom of what has occurred, of seeking expert input, of talking to people with lived experience and victims around what they think would have made a difference, synthesising all that information and giving government sound advice. But it is the responsibility of elected governments and parliaments to make policy for the state. I absolutely think that our system of federation creates huge challenges for implementing sound policy, and I also think we don't properly across all jurisdictions, recognise the role of families and children and the role of government in creating ecosystems that safeguard and protect our children. Child safety is everyone's business. We need not just the daycare workers and the people that run early childhood centres, child safety officers and government workers to be aware of how to keep children safe. That's why I'm really clear that one of the best outcomes from that review, and I want to acknowledge Bob Atkinson, a proud Queenslander who has driven much improvements for the child safe standards scheme, we have legislation now that will require all Queensland organisations that work with children to become child safe. That legislation will take effect in October of this year. It's one part of building a culture of safety that prevents children from being abused. That's what I want to see, and I want to see all governments collaborating to get that outcome.

REPORTER:

Premier, what are you expecting....

PREMIER:

Well, I should go, I should go Lydia, because we rushed her. And is this your last day?

REPORTER:

My last week. Last week.

PREMIER:

Honestly, you've had more farewells in John Farnham. But anyway, keep going. Over to you.

REPORTER:

Do you support mandatory sentencing for antisemitic and terror attacks?

PREMIER:

Well, let's, let me wait to see what happens at a National Cabinet this afternoon, and I shouldn't comment about what will be discussed before then, but I'll make some generic comments about where things have reached with that. And before I do, I think it's clear that I've been calling this out for some time, and I use one of my first addresses to you to point out how the rise of antisemitic behaviour was, was ripping down the, the moral fabric of us as a society. And what I've seen unfold has wound the clock back a century on antisemitic behaviour in this country. And my message to National Cabinet is we must deal with it in the strongest possible terms. And if that body doesn't well, then Queensland will. I might just leave it there for now.

REPORTER:

What kind of suggestions will you be bringing to National Cabinet?

PREMIER:

Let's let that discussion take place. I think that's the right venue for me to raise my issues with.

REPORTER:

Premier, there were more than 100 calls from Logan, DV related calls to police that were unresourced over the weekend. Is that concerning? Is that acceptable?

PREMIER:

Deeply concerning and deeply unacceptable, and we have to make sure that the system can respond to as many vulnerable people as possible. And that's not happening at the moment for a number of reasons. And I want to make the commitment that firstly, we have to make sure that we've got the laws in place to deal with perpetrators. And the Minister addressed it the other day quite eloquently, but to be clear, there will be GPS trackers fitted in the upcoming financial year. The first roll out of those hardcore dangerous offenders, and not a moment too soon. In addition to that, we have to make sure that the resources are in place to enable police to be able to police this. What's happening at the moment is there, there is just such a backlog in jobs, and police just aren't able to get there. And that's placing more vulnerable and women in vulnerable situations, vulnerable women and children in terrible situations. So we have to embark on reform. And no system will ever be perfect. No one's suggesting it will, but we have to give every opportunity possible to keep people safe. And that involves dealing with perpetrators in a very forceful way and enabling police to be able to get to more jobs and be able to do the job that they signed up to.

REPORTER:

Logan continues to be swamped by calls, 60 per cent being DV. There's been suggestions from the union to break down the barriers of different districts. Is that something that you're keen on addressing?

PREMIER:

Our first priority is ensuring that there are adequate resources with more police, and the second is the laws to be able to get them to do their job. That's the first thing. I've got a very good relationship with the Police Union, and we'll continue to speak, I can assure you. I was with Shane the other day in Mount Isa. And look, Logan is under immense pressure. But it's not the only station where there's a backlog of jobs, and the majority of those jobs are DV and can't continue. And we have to make sure that there are the resources and the laws to enable people to be kept safe. I'm mindful, I'm mindful that we've also had an incredibly high attrition rate amongst the Queensland Police Service, and a big component of it is the burnout, the fatigue and the sense that they aren't able to do their job, and we've listened to that, and I assure you there will be change. Change in the way that dangerous perpetrators are dealt with, and change in the way that we police domestic and family violence to make sure that police are able to do their job with the help from those support agencies.

REPORTER:

Does there need to be a DV Commissioner?

PREMIER:

We're looking at all sorts of, we're looking at all sorts of suggestions that come forward. Our first, first priority is to deal with the attrition rate of police and to fix those laws. That, that's first cab off the rank.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] around the Star? Any position on the Star? Can you tell us whether or not you will consider tax relief?

PREMIER:

I'm, I'm not sure there's confusion in my position. I just don't want to say anything to the market that I could be accused of passing judgment on the viability of a company or not. But I'll say what I've now said consecutively for about a month. I don't have any interest in the corporate suits of Star. Zero. My only focus are on the workers. Now that's a pretty definitive statement, but I don't know the viability of Star. That, that's for them to say. I'm, I'm not sure about that, and none of my comments could be used now or into the future to determine the viability or otherwise of that particular entity last year.

REPORTER:

But Premier, \$1.6 million was given in relief last year. So has the Star come to you, have you had any conversations about continuing that kinds of relief?

PREMIER:

We'll have lots of conversations, provided they're focused on keeping people in, in work, and that involves that building remaining open and for it to be able to serve the purpose that it was initially done, initially set up for. That was always the terms of conditions of that development occurring. There were also other terms of conditions that weren't met. And whilst our focus right now is only on the workers in continuing that operation, there will be a very big focus in the future about what negotiations happen behind closed doors to enable them to not fulfill their bargain that they signed up to. But there, there are others who could furnish you with more information than me on that. Yes, Jack?

REPORTER:

Can you rule out tax concessions for Star? Are you ruling that out?

PREMIER:

I'm not, I'm not making any comment that can in any way be used to suggest that I believe there's any viability, any liquidity issues with the company. But, but again, I'll, I'll be... James, I was very direct with you the other day. So, so here goes to you, Jack. Star's operations is not the focus of the Queensland Government. I'm not on their board. I have no interest in whether or not they that they are a viable entity, whether they are or not. My concern is the people who work for them, and whoever they work for today or tomorrow, whether it's the same company or a different one, whether an administrator is there or not. I just want that place to be opened, and I want as many people as possible to have a job. That's it for us.

REPORTER:

What would you say to Queenslanders, Premier, Queenslanders who believe that offering a tax break to a mega corporation when small businesses aren't offered the same just doesn't pass the pub test?

PREMIER:

Yes. I... I don't know about the viability of Star. I'm only interested in their workers, Harry. I... I'll leave it there.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] governments set conditions in the deal that they initially proposed to Star, one of them was a jobs guarantee, and the other was no bonuses or performance...

PREMIER:

Yeah. Oh, there are others. There are others. There was also...

REPORTER:

Sorry, is that something that you would consider in any sort of tax relief package? There'd have to be a jobs guarantee and no executive bonuses?

PREMIER:

I'm not commenting on any payment to a company that could be used to suggest they're in trouble when then when they haven't outlined to the mark of their position. But I will talk about, more generally, about my view on, on that, where that deal is at the moment. There are job opportunities that weren't created because deals by the company weren't honoured, and a big part of that is because of the militant behaviour of the CFMEU, which made things in the mind of the market far more challenging than what they should have been. And rather than be held to account, that behaviour was rewarded and I'd like to know a little bit more about that, but that's tomorrow's concern. Today's concern is the workers. Not the viability of Star. The workers. That's, that's our only concern today.

REPORTER:

The State Opposition had a presser at the Gold Coast today saying that you're cutting staff from satellite hospitals. Is that true?

PREMIER:

Well, your, your, your role is to allow them to, to pose questions, mine is to answer, and I'll answer it like this. No. Absolutely not. And in the end, the Opposition can only make outrageous claims and continue to be proven wrong time and time again for so long. And the answer that question is no. The answer to many of the desperate pleas have been categorically ruled out, and most of you have seen through that. If, if they want to, if they want to make allegations of things, they have to be able to prove it otherwise eventually, the music runs out for them. We have a commitment around what the former government called satellite hospitals, and it's a few things. One is to properly name them, and work's underway, and you saw in the health audit why that's so important. The second is to bolster the services are there. That's going to take more workers. So that's, that's an important point. We've, we promised to add MRIs and CTS across quite a few of those, and that work is going to be underway. so there will be more staff employed there, but they will be properly named and properly resourced to complement the roles of Queensland Health.

REPORTER:

Why is there a review underway at the moment within Queensland Health into these satellite hospitals, and why have external contractors been engaged to do that?

PREMIER:

We want the facilities that the former government calls satellite hospitals, let's call them what, what they will be, but we want them to be able to operate to the next level. We want them to have increasingly capacity like MRI and CT scanners. We want them to be named so there's clarity to the market. We want them to complement the existing hospital system. Exactly what we said we would before the election. And I keep making the point, the decision making process that we are taking is exactly a reflection of what we said on the other side of the election, and I hope that shows the Queenslanders we serious about providing calm and methodical leadership.

REPORTER:

Just one more on Star. It seems.... [inaudible]

PREMIER:

Two more on Star.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] entire survival strategy hinges on this [inaudible]. Is it in the workers best interest to deny that which would ultimately lead to a [inaudible]?

PREMIER:

The workers interest is for them to be able to have a casino and a facility that operates. I would suggest to you there's not a lot of workers who care what the name of the company is. They just want a job, and we have exactly the same attitude.

REPORTER:

Will there be job losses in the administration though? If they went into administration [inaudible].

PREMIER:

We want the facility to continue. We want an operation to continue. And continuity... that's if something was to happen and, and continuity of service enables growth into the future. If, if the operation can remain open, if whoever owns it is able to then invest in the developments that were promised and were always part of the deal, that will create more jobs. What I don't want to see is a hiatus, if anything wants to occur, that means that working people wouldn't have a job, and that will make it far more difficult for it to mobilise into the future. Those comments don't reflect what my view on the company though.

REPORTER:

If an agreement has to be done with the State Government to keep the casino open, will you promise that that deal will be made transparent? It won't be hidden behind commercial in confidence?

PREMIER:

But we've, we've shown how much with a believer on things being transparent. And I've spoken about the fact that one of my concerns is that a deal that was struck formally around conditions that weren't met were never made public. And I would be, I would be repeating those mistakes if we didn't. So Queenslanders need to know that we will be ensuring that whatever happens there focuses on the workers, and I can assure you, we'll be very transparent in our dealings with Queenslanders....

REPORTER:

When might the decision be made?

PREMIER:

... and that's the big focus. On... a decision, say that again Harry.

REPORTER:

When might the decision on this be made?

PREMIER:

On what?

REPORTER:

On whether or not you're going to, you know, bail them out?

PREMIER:

I'll point back to my earlier answers. Taylor?

REPORTER:

Can you please assure Queenslanders that a serious charge like rape will be included in the next tranche of crime laws?

PREMIER:

Thanks for the question. The independent evaluation panel, submissions are open now, as you know, and that body will be in place ahead of the next parliamentary sitting. It's important that they get to work as we said they would. And there will be many future charges that they will be looking at, many. The first round of the Making Queensland Safer laws were exactly those changes that we committed to Queenslanders. The timeline for delivery was exactly the timeline that we promised to Queenslanders. That two week window of committee, and we passed them before Queensland, before Christmas, exactly as we said. Now there were people who were very critical of that approach, but again, it's what we campaigned on. We then said we would set up an independent evaluation panel in the first quarter of the year. That'll be well and truly met. And then there are future ways of the Making Queensland Safer laws. Now, I've already outlined two of them. One is Jack's Law, and the other is what we're calling Daniel's Law. And the work will begin with that, and the Morcombe's have already expressed their willingness to be part of it. But there will be many changes. But to be clear, that won't be the final change to the Making Queensland Safer laws. There will be many and the difference... there will be many, and there will be significant work that needs to be done across many charges about what, what sentences look like, et cetera. So, so that work will be done. I'll just make this point. The difference between me and my predecessors is I will not spend one day in this office telling Queenslanders that crime isn't an issue and that we can't do better. We will always have to do better. And every day I'm in this role, I can assure you, we will be looking to say, how can we strengthen our laws, how can we improve early intervention, how can we fix the broken arms of government like we're announcing today. Because in the end, when governments can't keep their citizens safe and protect the vulnerable, that's when people lose faith with government. And I'm never going to give people excuses. I'm always going to look to do things better. And you know, there will be times when there are decisions as part of the Making Queensland Safer laws that we would like to see stronger, I'm sure, and we will constantly look at that and reflect and do everything we can to make sure that justice is being done for more people.

[ENDS]

Station: ABC Gold Coast

Program: Mornings

Reporter: Alexandra Utting

Interviewee: AMAQ President Dr Nick Yim, Opposition Leader Steven Miles

Date: 21 January 2025

Duration: 6 minutes 30 seconds

E&OE

REPORTERS:

The State Government is set to conduct an evaluation of Queensland's satellite hospitals. Various stakeholders and staff have been asked to identify opportunities and areas for improvement. The seven satellite hospitals were built by the Palaszczuk government, designed to ease the pressure on major hospitals. President of AMA Queensland, Dr Nick Yim, says it will be a part of the consultation and welcomes the review.

DR TIM:

So it's definitely highly positive. So this is something with regards to satellite hospitals. AMA Queensland and our members, we do have some concerns and this has been voiced over the past couple of months. So the fact that an evaluation is going to take place. AMA Queensland will work with Queensland Health to determine I guess whether efficiencies. But at the same time, where are the areas that we can do better? One of the concerns are obviously is confusion amongst the general public, where sometimes people are presenting to the wrong location, where they should have been presenting to an emergency department. We do have workforce challenges and that includes doctors, nurses, allied health and pharmacy, and we don't want our facilities competing with each other for workforce. So that includes your public hospitals, private hospitals, general practise and also community health services. Obviously, we know that these satellite hospitals requires a lot of funding and investment of taxpayers dollars. It's one of these things where we would like to see what is the effectiveness of these hospitals, because we know that when people present to their own general practise it costs taxpayers approximately \$43. At the same time, we also know that if a person presents to emergency department that costs over \$700. So this is something where we would like to see that evaluation take into account. What are the cost effectiveness of these programmes Investments has already taken place into the infrastructure. So obviously the money has already been spent. So this is the reason why moving forward with additional funding, we need to ensure that it is used effectively, that will benefit Queenslanders, because we do know that funding is finite.

REPORTER:

That is the president of AMA, Queensland doctor Nick Yim. But Opposition Leader Steven Miles has called on the government to rule out any cuts to services. He spoke with the ABC's Alexandra Utting.

STEVEN MILES:

Well, we're fine with this review if the result is more services at satellite hospitals, but our concern is that the reason they're doing this review is to find reasons to cut services at satellite hospitals. And we'd be very concerned about that, because we know that Queenslanders who have access to those satellite hospitals are finding them, very, very useful. We think it's really important that this review doesn't just talk to insiders from the health profession. It should also talk to consumers, people, members of the public who need these services, who use these services. And I'm very sure that if they include them in the review, the result will be a need for more satellite hospitals and more services. Not a cut to those services.

REPORTER:

Some people say that these hospitals are ineffective. Also, on the Gold Coast in particular, often people are told to go to Tweed because they don't treat babies or they don't treat serious incidents. What do you say to that in terms of the effectiveness of them?

STEVEN MILES:

Well, tens of thousands of people have had their ailments treated at these facilities, and they've not had to go to a big tertiary hospital or to pay for parking. And these hospitals also deliver outpatient appointments, specialist appointments that you'd otherwise have to go to a big hospital and pay for parking. They do dialysis. Many of them have chemo. Imagine you're someone who needs dialysis three times a week for 3 or 4 hours a session. The impost of having to go to a big hospital for that, versus being able to drive to a local facility and get that hospital level service in your community. That's what the satellite hospital is all about. And it's really changed the lives of those people.

REPORTER:

Now, this is only a review. It's looking at effectiveness. And I think, you know, looking at how things are operating is generally a good thing. Why are you so concerned about what the outcomes might be?

STEVEN MILES:

Well, we agree it's a good thing if the objective is to deliver more and better services. But we're concerned because the LNP have consistently opposed these facilities. We're concerned about their motives and that the fact that they're not talking to consumers or patients, they're only talking to people who've previously been critical of these facilities, that makes us suspicious that the LNP's real motives here are to try to take those services away from the

community. And we think, the answer to our health problems is more health services, not less.

REPORTER:

And can we just run through a little bit of the data? How widely used are they in Queensland?

STEVEN MILES:

Oh look, the last data I saw, 160,000 Queenslanders had access to these services across the seven facilities that are already open. Of course, we had a plan to build seven more that won't now happen, but it means that every day, families with a kid with a fever are able to access a service without having to go to a big hospital. It's relieving pressure on our ambulances, on our emergency departments. The data about the number of presentations at nearby emergency departments makes it pretty compelling that it's taking pressure off them while delivering better services closer to home.

REPORTER:

Now, you've said that David Crisafulli made a commitment not to cut the satellite hospitals. What are you calling on the state government to do?

STEVEN MILES:

We're calling on them to at least maintain the current level of services at those satellite hospitals. Of course, we'd like to see them expanded. We'd like to see even more hospital level services delivered from those satellite hospitals. And we certainly don't want. We certainly don't want to see any reduction in services offered.

REPORTER:

That's Opposition Leader Steven Miles having a chat to ABC's Alexandria Utting.

[ENDS]

Station: 4BC
 Program: Mornings
 Compere: Bill McDonald
 Interviewee: Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie
 Date: 22 January 2025, 10:20am
 Duration: 12mins 30sec

E&OE

BILL MCDONALD:

Two massive curveballs have been thrown straight at the Crisafulli Government as we kick into the new year. Star Entertainment teetering on the brink of collapse, putting the brand new Queen's Wharf precinct at risk. Six thousand jobs are on the line there as well. And we've got Olympic Village now to be built, but no money set aside to build it with. So how are you going to solve all these problems? Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie joins us now. Good morning. Welcome back to work in the New Year.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Good morning, Bill, and good morning to all your listeners.

BILL MCDONALD:

Where do we go with these? Will you... what are we going to do with the Queen's Wharf precinct from becoming a white elephant? Firstly, on that one, before we get to the Olympics.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, our priority, of course, is not the suits that sit around the table or the proprietors of the Queen's Wharf, it's the workers. And so there's been no secret deal by this government. I noticed Steven Miles talking about, you know, not doing any secret deals. The only government that I knew did any secret deals with Queen's Wharf was Steven Miles and Cameron Dick. So if they want to go down that path, then they should release all the deals they did. But look, we're obviously concerned. Our priority has got to be the workers. There's lots of workers that are over there relying on the operation and, you know, the businesses, the café's, the restaurants. So that's got to be our priority. And I know the Treasurer is attuned to that at the moment, and Deb Frecklington, the Attorney-General, who obviously is responsible for casino regulation.

BILL MCDONALD:

Would it be worth putting the Star Casino and the Entertainment Group into voluntary administration? And why hasn't that happened?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, that's a matter obviously not for me, Bill, that's a matter for the company. And that's the discussions that I suspect the company is having at the moment with their financiers. But that's not a, you know, that's not a matter for, that's not a matter for government. Our priority is thinking about the workers. And as I said, the, you know, all the suits in the world can talk to us on that, but it's not about them. It's not about the proprietor, it's about the workers. So I think the company's got to make certain decisions, and then we have to focus on the workers.

BILL MCDONALD:

Where's the government at in terms of, and you mentioned the Treasurer's obviously across all of this, where is the government at in terms of helping bail out Star to save those workers? What's... a lot of people are saying don't do it, but there's obviously an important consideration that needs to be made on that front.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, Bill, it's hard because I, obviously I'm not involved in those discussions. It's really a matter for the Treasurer. And I'm not aware of, I'm not aware and I just don't want to give you any wrong information. So I think we're best to ask the Treasurer that he's standing up in MYEFO tomorrow, but I suspect he's in the process now of finalising the detail in MYEFO that he's going to be delivering tomorrow, which essentially is Labor's last budget, which is... is not, is not good, I've got to say.

BILL MCDONALD:

Yeah, So, well, you can't proceed what's happening tomorrow, but it's not going to be pretty?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, as I said, mate, it's MYEFO for the first government, the first MYEFO for our government. But it's really, in essence, Labor's last budget update. Labor's legacy. We will show how challenging it was going to be if Labor had got re-elected. And, you know, Olympic and Paralympics, I've already discussed and released publicly the \$181 million budget blowout on only three of the minor venues. I was able to ascertain that information and then part of the MYEFO process, we've been able to ascertain that the villages for the Olympians and Paralympians was a \$3.5 billion black hole that the former Labor government forgot to budget for and forgot to plan. And this is on top of, Bill, the \$7.1 billion for the venues. It's on top of that.

BILL MCDONALD:

What's the answer to it? How do you fix that? Where do you find it?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, the first thing is the LNP government promised openness and transparency. So that's the first thing. We wanted to make sure Queenslanders knew what the, you know, the estimated now costs are and to deliver those four villages for the athletes is \$3.5 billion. And I still think that's a conservative estimate. The plan for the government is, of course, the GIICA, which is the Games Independent Infrastructure Games Authority. We have tasked

with looking at the athletes villages, the location of the athletes villages, the cost, but also doing something the former Labor government refused to do because they hated the private sector. The Labor government hated small businesses. They hated all businesses. You've got to look at delivering this type of infrastructure that Queensland needs with the private sector, and that's why we've put in the terms of reference for GIICA, the Games Authority, they must look at the private sector and PPPs to help government deliver all this infrastructure that Queensland so desperately needs. Whether it's whether it's the Games villages, whether it's the infrastructure, generational road and rail infrastructure, they must look at that. And I think that was a deliberate act that the former Labor government, because they hated business to just think that the taxpayer could fund all of this. And the reality is, Bill, you can't. You can't just keep printing money for this, which is what the former Labor government was thinking they were going to get away with.

BILL MCDONALD:

So it's inevitable it's going to have to go down that sort of route. That's what I said. You can't keep making and printing money to throw it at what seems to be an ever-growing debt mountain.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, I think the former Labor government, including the Shadow Treasurer, Shannon Fentiman, I think that was their philosophy in life. That money grew on trees and you could just use it, and it's just not how the world works. And we promised Queenslanders that we'd respect their money. And I've got to be clear with Queenslanders how tough this is going to be. It... we will deliver the best Games in the world in 2032, but I also want to make sure everyone benefits, including regional and rural Queensland. They have been the forgotten people in the Olympic and Paralympic Games. And you know, Labor voted against having a rural representative on the Games Authority for goodness sake. We changed the legislation. We put a rural and regional representative with a focus on that. We've got the \$250 million Games On program which is about grassroots community sport. It's making sure that kids in the bush have as much opportunity to participate in grassroots sports and become Olympians and Paralympians as city kids do, and that's going to be our focus. And I think, you know, I think you'll see tomorrow with MYEFO, even though I say it's the last Labor budget update, it's Labor's legacy, it will show that the LNP is up for the challenge of correcting a lot of these issues and making sure we can get on with the job and deliver this infrastructure for the future.

BILL MCDONALD:

Is this part of the review process, the Games villages or that's separate to that? And will it mean that there's going to have to be a change of thinking on where the village is at and how it's all put together and located in different parts of South East Queensland?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

It's definitely in the Games Authority gambit at the moment. It's actually in the terms of reference specifically for the Games Authority to look at within the 100 days the actual villages. And obviously they will know the cost because our departments and Treasury will

be briefing and have briefed GIICA, which is the independent authority, on the cost. And I think anyone would be a fool to think that villages could continue at \$3.5 billion, wholly paid for by the Queensland taxpayers, on top of the \$7.1 billion venue which the former Labor government expects the taxpayer to pay for as well. It would only be the Labor Party that think that would economically make sense. We need to respect Queenslanders money. We want these programs to continue, but the authority has the full authority, I might say, to look at the location of these villages and look to the private sector and look at alternative ways to deliver this, not only the infrastructure but also the villages.

BILL MCDONALD:

And you've got the crunch of has it been considered of... if it's been overlooked in terms of budgeting and putting money aside for it, just getting labour and materials and getting and fitting it in with all of the other infrastructure that's in the pipeline, the massive pipeline of work that's to come not only on the Olympics, but in other projects around Queensland?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Oh, indeed. Indeed. And we've had to turn our attention to that because I think....

BILL MCDONALD:

Which is probably why you're alluding to the fact that this could change and be more than \$3.5 if there's a crunch for labour and building?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, indeed. But if you look at all the other projects, the infrastructure pipeline in Queensland that we need to deliver, the health and hospital services, the, you know, the other things we've talked about, like Cross River Rail and CopperString, which have had billions and billions of dollars of budget blow. Tomorrow you'll see in MYEFO that, yes, we will set out Labor's legacy, but we'll also show that the LNP is up for the challenge. We will deal with the issue of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, in particularly with the athletes villages in the MYEFO that will be handed down by the Treasurer tomorrow. So it's not all about just showing the legacy of Labor, because I think your listeners know it's a bad legacy. It was a bad government for 10 years that really put us in this nasty position we find ourselves now. But we want to be up front with Queenslanders, disclose the costings that Labor never disclosed. And I, to be truthful, Bill, I think the Labor Party thought if they could just scrape across the line in the election, they'll just deal with all this after the election. But then thinking, oh don't worry, we've got another four years to do it. Well, that's no way to plan and budget and plan infrastructure in Queensland because they could never have delivered this type of infrastructure and these athletes villages and the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the infrastructure required for road and rail with that attitude. You simply could not have done it.

BILL MCDONALD:

How do you do it then? Last question before I let you go. When we see this plan, how do you do that? As you said, you can't keep printing money without cutting costs somewhere or some sort of restrictions or changes or how do you do it?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Well, a couple of things. We suspended BPIC if you recall, the CFMEU tax, that's a big one. And a lot of those costings, that three minor venues that I mentioned, which had been \$181 million over budget before contracts had even been entered into. A lot of that \$181 million was actually BPIC aka the CFMEU tax. So that's why we took the decision early on in government to suspend BPIC. And then on top of that, we've set up the Productivity Commission. So we've introduced the legislation for the Productivity Commission. It's going to be debated in Parliament in February this year. And then the first item of business to the Productivity Commission will be the building and construction industry. Because at the moment, moment, in Brisbane and across Queensland, you've got many construction sites that are operating at the moment on 2.5 productive days per week, 2.5 productive days per week. That means that a lot of the workers are working 2.5 days when we look at productivity. So I think the way to deal with this in the future is one, get the CFMEU under control, which I think we have with the suspension of BPIC. Secondly, set up the Productivity Commission. Thirdly, the first referral is the building industry and the construction industry. And fourthly, we're actually at the moment talking to groups like the Planning Institute of Australia, PIA, about how we can train the planners of the future to make sure that we are planning all this infrastructure and things, because it's not only a skill shortage. And I'll make the final point, Bill, the most exciting thing is, I think with the new government, a spotlight in Queensland, we want to show, and we want to show everyone that we are open for business. I think what you'll find is if we have better conditions for business to be done in Queensland, you will find other businesses in New South Wales and Victoria particularly, will look to Queensland and say, hey, we want to do business in Queensland. We want to partner with the new Queensland Government. Queensland is open for business under the new government and we're bringing our workers to that. And now that will be disadvantaged, disadvantage to New South Wales and Victoria. But I don't care. I'm a Queenslander. I'm the Deputy Premier of Queensland. And I know the Premier's view is if we can do good by businesses in Queensland that are already here and create more opportunities for more Queenslanders to get work and steal some business from New South Wales and Victoria, that's great for Queensland.

BILL MCDONALD:

Deputy Premier, thanks for your time.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Good on you, Bill. Thank you.

BILL MCDONALD:

Really appreciate it. There he is, Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie.

[ENDS]

Station: 4BC Brisbane

Program: Mornings with Bill McDonald

Speaker/s: Treasurer David Janetzki

Airdate: Friday 24 January 2025 10.25am

Duration: 6 minutes 36 seconds

E&OE

BILL McDONALD:

Alright, I said we were hoping to speak to Queensland Treasurer David Janetzki this morning. He's had a very busy morning, but he's just managed to get him on the line now between appointments. So thanks for your time, Treasurer. You're up in Toowoomba, I believe, this morning?

TREASURER:

Yeah. Great to be with you, Bill. Yes, I've, I did the big announcement yesterday with Labor's last budget update and I've just raced up the hill. I'm in between. I've done a press conference with the Premier this morning up home, so it was good to welcome him to the Darling Downs.

BILL McDONALD:

Yes, I know you've got something to go to about 10:30am so we won't hold you up, but what's been the...I was talking this morning about what's been the response been to your update and, I know there's a lot of good reasons to kick Labor, and there's a lot of stuff you've been left to deal with. What's been the response in terms of dialling it forward and how you fix it and how you address it, and whether the government will address it? And we're not just going to sit here and accept it.

TREASURER:

Yep. So look, the sad part for me, Bill, is that, you know, so many people expected it. You know, like the people I've been talking to are like, oh, well we're not surprised, right? We knew, you know, the election campaign alone told us how they'd lost complete control of any fiscal discipline. If you remember, you know, Steven Miles is going to give us state owned servos and energy retailers and lunches and the whole works. So they had already lost control. And it was pretty obvious during the election campaign that was what was happening. So I get a feeling there's the people I'm talking to in the last 24 hours, you know, just people on the street, they're like, we're not surprised that it's this bad. Now, you know, the Premier and I, you know, we're making it really clear we're up for the challenge we face. And, you know, we've been pretty clear on our plan. You know, first part of the plan was always we had to make sure we understood the depth of the challenge and the depths of their deceit, deficits and debt. So we've established that. But while we were doing that, we're also

working on our plan to save money. And, you know, that's why I don't think there's been too many governments that have ever saved \$54 billion in their first couple of months. So we did that by ending Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro by pausing BPIC, which is going to save probably around \$17 billion over five years. So, we've taken some strong steps. You know, I'm taking ratings agencies seriously. I'm talking to them. They're noting what we're trying to do, but we've got to be prepared. It's highly likely we'll get a rating downgrade [inaudible]

BILL McDONALD:

You reckon that's a given? Almost?

TREASURER:

Look, you know, unlike Cameron Dick, I'm taking it seriously. And he spent years kind of goading ratings agencies or not pretending it mattered. But ultimately, they determine that the cost at which we borrow as a state, you know, so when we go and borrow money, if our credit rating is worse, it costs more. So Cameron Dick didn't care.

BILL McDONALD:

Can I ask you one quick question? If you knew all this was coming, but admittedly, you didn't know the extent, why did you accept the budget position, without sight unseen prior to the election?

TREASURER:

Well, you know, Bill, like we need to maintain the services that Queenslanders need because we, both know that we're going to need more police officers and we need more nurses, right? So we need to preserve those services and in fact, deliver more and better services for the future. It's probably the capital expenditure. It's those big projects that...it's, you know, it's an appalling situation. We find ourselves in all those blow-outs the big project like CopperString went from \$6.2 billion, and it was \$9 billion before the election and Labor had never told anyone knew it. Same with Borumba. It was \$14 before the election. We've now discovered it's \$18. They never told anyone and knew it. So, it's just that litany of deception. And, you know, we've taken some early steps. We've got our plan. I'm taking it seriously with the credit rating agencies, keeping in touch with them. And now we enter into the budget process as the next part of our plan, we're going to be doing that work. You know, our Finance Minister Ros Bates, is responsible for expenditure of government. And make sure making sure that we're getting the best value for money possible. We're going to go through the budget process. The budget's on the 24th of June. I hope to come back on and tell you more, about the improvements that we've made to the budget then.

BILL McDONALD:

But I know you...sorry to interrupt you. I know you've made promises, and you want, to keep all the election promises. No cuts, no changes. I'm not sure how you do that, but if it needed to and you needed to take, say, a leaf out of Catherine King's book and just reconsider the entire pipeline of infrastructure projects. Is that, would you do that if that's what it takes?

TREASURER:

Well, look on Borumba, let me give an example on Borumba right. So that's one of those projects that's one of those projects that, you know, I've taken the blow out. So \$14 billion I've told the people of Queensland, it's now \$18 billion. Now, I met with Queensland Hydro about that project, and they said there was optionality to get the project done, but in another way. Right. So [inaudible] tax bill we want to make sure they're good. But we've got to do it. We've got to explore the options. And Borumba is the first one of those that I'm personally looking at, because Queensland Hydro have said that's a project that could be a smaller, more manageable pumped hydro. That's what we said before the election. We would do try and take that large risk, large stress off the balance sheet and invest in smaller, more manageable projects to deliver for Queensland. And that's, you know, that's a key part of getting the books back in, shape. And Borumba will be a starting point for me in that regard.

BILL McDONALD:

All right. I know you've got to go. And we'll have to have a chat at another stage. I really appreciate you squeezing us in.

TREASURER:

No. Pleasure. Bill. Thanks for having me.

BILL McDONALD:

Treasurer David Janetzki. And he has a mountain to climb. Big job ahead of him. But look, I think we're in good hands. And he just... I think they will keep us across the roadmap and how they plan to do it. And there's a little bit of a snapshot, I guess, on the Borumba project, for a start. But I guess we'll stay tuned. And as he said, we'll keep in touch, and we'll keep learning how they're going to get the books balanced. Again. It's not going to it's not going to happen overnight. It's going to happen over a long period of time. But, it sounds like they've got the ticker for it. And I asked that question this morning and I'm confident that they're going to get the job done.

[ENDS]

Station: ABC Radio Brisbane

Program: Mornings

Speaker/s: Treasurer David Janetzki

Airdate: Friday 24 January 2025 8.35am

Duration: 14 minutes 30 seconds

E&OE

STEVE AUSTIN:

As you've been following the last 24 to 48 hours in the news, it turns out that the state of Queensland has a whopping \$218 billion worth of public debt. But by the sounds of things, the new State Government is not going to change much at this stage. There'll be no cutbacks or significant further savings other than what's already been announced by the new government. More on that later. Queensland Treasurer David Janetzki says after the state's economic outlook was released yesterday; we're still on track for a credit downgrade. This means that future government borrowing to build things will be more expensive. And remember, the money is not theirs, it's yours. You pay for it, comes out of your pocket. Stamp duty, land tax, payroll tax. Many would describe that as a tax on employment. More on that later on. We got here due to what the new State Government describes as ten years of debt and deficit and deceit by the previous government. This is Treasurer David Janetzki.

TREASURER:

Well, Steve, it's been a long ten years of, to be honest, deceit and deception from the former government in terms of how they've allowed a range of capital projects to be blowing out and unrestrained spending in, you know, the operational expenditure side of the budget and probably the one of the most deceptive things that I observed in the first nine years of the Labor Government, average expense growth was 6.6 per cent. But in Cameron Dick's final budget, he forecast that expense growth across the forwards would be 1.4 per cent. And I look at that particular point of evidence as where they had completely given up any semblance of honesty around their forecasting. And I just think, you know, what we've learned over the last three months, and it's been quite a methodical way. We've gone through both the operating expenditure side, but the capital expenditure side in particular, all the project blow-outs that the former government had said were going to be a certain price actually turned out to be another, whether it be a CopperString at \$6.2 billion, they knew it was \$9 billion before the election and they never said it. Borumba, it was \$14 billion. They knew and didn't tell Queenslanders that it was actually going to be \$18 billion. So, we saw a, in my view, a gradual decline over that ten year period of the Palaszczuk and Miles Governments, where there just wasn't any ground truthing to their forecasting.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Now, they would say they were building much needed infrastructure to cope with the rapid post-pandemic growth in Queensland and as cost-of-living relief. In other words, they justified it on those two points.

TREASURER:

Well, most of the capital expenditure, is on projects that are years and years overdue and are billions and billions of dollars over budget. So, their arguments about that, they were delivering capital growth, capital projects just doesn't stack up. You know, I look at a Cross River Rail, for instance. Originally it was going to be \$5.4 billion, and now it looks the total cost is going to be north of \$17 billion. That is years overdue.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Can you say...can I get you to repeat that? So because they were very firm on that, the cost of Cross River Rail was going to be no more than \$6 billion, you're now telling me that it's nearly three times that, nearly \$17 billion when it's final and completed and fully operational is that am I hearing you correctly, David Janetzki the Cross River Rail project?

TREASURER:

Once all the augmentation, once all the project is done initially back when it was forecast back in, you know, ten years ago, it was going to be around \$5.4 billion. And now it is an extraordinary cost increase over that ten-year period. But that's just a tip of the iceberg.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Okay. Well, that's a pretty clear picture.

TREASURER:

[inaudible] Pioneer Burdekin too Steve.

STEVE AUSTIN:

So well, you know, you guys have said you're not going to build the big pumped hydro project in North Queensland. My question is why did the Estimates process not pick any of this up? You guys were there. You were there in the Estimates quote process. You were asking questions. Estimates, they are required to answer questions. Why did you pick none of this up in the Estimates process of state parliament?

TREASURER:

Steve, the Estimates process did deliver serious news of all their blow-outs across the years. And if you go back year by year, often Estimates picks up some of those smaller issues portfolio to portfolio. But there was time and time again when projects would be examined by line ministers, by line opposition ministers and either, the questions were avoided or the numbers given by the former government wouldn't stack up. Now...

STEVE AUSTIN:

I mean, if they were misleading a parliamentary committee, isn't that...can't parliament do something about that if you because you've been put out a statement today saying they lied. I mean, you're not even allowed to use that word in state parliament. They lied. If that's the case, can't parliament take action where public servants, bureaucrats or previous government ministers misled the parliamentary committee? Parliament has power to do something about that.

TREASURER:

Well, Steve, there's no doubt I haven't gone down that path considering that issue. But there's no doubt the depths of the deception are significant. And I look, you know, there was one report, Steve, just before the budget last year, where Cameron Dick actually let slip into the media that he thought the debt might be \$188 billion. And then, miraculously, by the budget, six or eight weeks, it was back to \$172 billion. So every now and again, Cameron Dick would let slip with the truth. And that debt figure, you know, he let slip and then by the budget was back at \$172 billion. And what we've seen since with the capital blow-outs that we've taken out since the election, you know, it's obvious that particularly I look at a project like CopperString, both Minister de Brenni and Cameron Dick as former Treasurer...Mick de Brenni has admitted knowing that cost blow-out went from \$6.2 billion to \$9 billion. Cameron Dick said he was never aware of it, but across the former government they were always aware of these cost blow-outs, and they concealed them from the Queensland people. And yesterday, with my revealing Labor's last budget update, it was clear we had identified all the capital project overruns. We've now taken them to the Queensland people and, you know, whether it's Borumba or Cross River Rail or Olympic villages or education or housing or energy projects, you know, we've been up front with the Queensland people after a decade of deception.

STEVE AUSTIN:

My guest is the Treasurer of Queensland, the new Treasurer of Queensland, David Janetzki. This is 612 ABC Brisbane broadcasting live from the Lifeline Book Fest. So David Janetzki, you're the Treasurer. It's now your headache. How are you going to fix it?

TREASURER:

So, Steve, calmly and methodically. We've spent that first three months. We had to understand the mountain that we had to climb. And so that has been an important part of the work we've been doing. So, while that part of our plan was being undertaken, we'd actually been taking action already. And we mentioned it briefly. So Pioneer Burdekin, that project, which would have been a dead weight on the Queensland balance sheet for the next ten years while it was being constructed. And that was one of those projects that had gone from \$12 to \$24. And now we found out within a day or two after the election, it was \$36.8 billion. So, we've said we will not be progressing with that project.

STEVE AUSTIN:

That's old news. How are you going to fix them? You've got new figures here, \$218 billion worth of total debt in Queensland. What are you going to do?

TREASURER:

So Steve we've said that on Pioneer Burdekin. We've also paused BIC. We estimate that'll be \$17 billion over five years. That will be saved. And, I expect there'll be more savings with respect to BPIC on those large scale projects across Queensland, north of \$100 million, that there will be additional savings there. [inaudible] yesterday was the next part of our plan in respect of identifying those capital projects overruns that have been unfunded, the operational expense commitments made by the former government that had been unfunded. So that's been an important part of it. And when I talk about the plan that we're working on, Steve, you'd appreciate I actually spoke with the credit rating agencies, before the information that was revealed went public. And I'd actually conveyed to them, about Pioneer Burdekin and BPIC, and they acknowledged that would ease the pressure. They received that news favourably, that would ease the pressure on medium- and long-term projections across, the next period of time. So...

STEVE AUSTIN:

December last year, you told me that S&P looked like we were set to lose our AA+ credit rating. Is that still the case or is that not the case?

TREASURER:

So look, I said that once we'd gone through this, in fact, my first month when I spoke to you in December, Steve and I'd gone through that first month and I'd said that knowing what we knew then, it was highly likely we'd get an outlook downgrade. So there's the two parts to the rating, there's the outlook downgrade and then a potential rating downgrade. You know, New South Wales and Tasmania's outlook was downgraded last year...

STEVE AUSTIN:

I don't care about this. I just care about us. You're the Treasurer of Queensland. Are we still going to lose, going to have a credit rating downgrade or not, Treasurer Janetzki?

TREASURER:

It is. You know, it is highly likely we'll get an outlook downgrade Steve. And it now is looking highly likely that we may in fact have a rating downgrade as well. You know Standard and Poors', Moody's will conduct a review. They've now seen the full numbers in Labor's last budget update yesterday. They'll go away and review those numbers. I'm intending to keep meeting with them because Steve one of the contrasts...

STEVE AUSTIN:

Okay. So I'm just I'm mindful of the time. I'm mindful that you're busy and you have to go to a call in a moment with the Premier but the other side of politics, the LNP, by accepting the previous government's budget and going along with many of their spending announcements and commitments and saying no cuts and having no budget plan of your own. Aren't you also a contributor to the state's fiscal mess today in 2025? David Janetzki, you accepted this last year, basically lock, stock and barrel.

TREASURER:

Well, Steve, I'd reject that. We've been really clear about the savings we're going to make, whether it be Pioneer Burdekin, whether it be BPIC. We've been very clear about, you know, the work that we've been doing and the budget process that is now ahead. We always said, Steve, it would be calm and methodical. There's ten years of debt deficit and deception behind us. What we have lying ahead of us is a challenge, but we'll be calm and methodical. We've got a budget process to progress through now. We'll do that work, and I want to see budget improvement so we can improve the lives of Queenslanders in the future.

STEVE AUSTIN:

The Premier your boss, David Crisafulli, committed to respecting public money. How are you respecting public money if you're not going to make any significant savings, if you're not going to cut back spending, if you're not even going to put a freeze on the public service, are you going to put a freeze on continuing growth in the public service? Today's *Australian* says in just the last few months, the public service bill in Queensland has blown out to what, \$8.1 billion, I think was, sorry, \$8.61 billion. That's how big just to pay for the public service in Queensland. And you're not going to cut, suspend or put a hold on growth in any of this?

TREASURER:

Steve, I'd say two things here, I reckon on the savings side, a brand-new government in its first three months, we've saved \$54 billion. I reckon that's a very good start on Pioneer Burdekin and BPIC, I can't imagine too many governments anywhere in Australia that have ever made such, savings decisions so early. With respect to public servants, we want to make it really clear we need more of those frontline workers. Steve. The former government set police targets and health worker targets. They would miss them all. They miss the police target that they set at the previous election by 1147 jobs. We need those public servants in those key positions. You know, we've got negotiations coming up with respect to a range of workers. We'll continue when those negotiations, take place. They'll be done in good faith. But, Steve, it is ten years of debt and deception that we've got behind us.

STEVE AUSTIN:

That's ten years of old news then. So today I'm getting from you. There's going to be no major direction or trajectory change for the new government at this point in time? When will we find out the June 23rd state budget? When will we know?

TREASURER:

So, Steve, the budget will be on June the 24th. We've got that process beginning now. We've got our Finance Minister Ros Bates. She's responsible for responsible expenditure across the government. There's the budget process. Now, I just say, Steve, \$54 billion in the first couple of months of any new government in savings, you know, I think that's a pretty rare achievement. But we know there's so much more to work. And I want to keep targeting budget improvement so we can keep improving the lives of Queenslanders.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Treasurer David Janetzki, thank you very much for your time.

TREASURER:

Thanks, Steve.

STEVE AUSTIN:

Queensland Treasurer David Janetzki. Keep listening. What does the now opposition think about the figures that were released yesterday? All of the blame has been sheeted home to them. You'll hear from the Shadow Treasury spokesperson Shannon Fentiman in just a few moments.

[ENDS]

Station: ABC Radio Brisbane
 Program: Mornings
 Compere: Steve Austin
 Interviewee: PeakCare CEO Tom Allsop
 Date: 22 January 2025
 Duration: 10mins

E&OE

The Queensland Government has announced an inquiry into Queensland's blue card and child protection system, as you've learnt. This comes after a former childcare worker pleaded guilty to more than 300 charges committed in centres here in Brisbane and Italy over a two decade, a 20 year period. It's just astounding how it could happen. He was sentenced to life in prison non-parole period of 27 years. The Child Death Review Board chair, Luke Twyford, has been asked by the state, the new state government to head an inquiry into the child protection system and look at how on earth this happened.

It is incredibly horrific.

As parents, we trust that when we place our children in organisations, in the care of professionals, that they will not only be safe, but they will thrive. They will be given opportunities to learn and grow, and to hear that abuse is occurring in institutions. After the royal commissions and the reviews that have already occurred, um, just saddened me, shocked me, and it compels me to make sure the review I lead this year is significant and the responsibility weighs heavy on me.

The review comes after the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and a Queensland Blue Card Inquiry, both in 2017. So what would be different about this one? Tom Allsop is the chief executive officer of Peak Care. It's a peak body for child protection in Queensland. Tom, thanks for joining me this morning. Give me your take on this move.

Okay. Great to be with you Steve. And look we're really pleased and welcome the announcement of this inquiry by the new Queensland Government and as well as the thousands of organisations in Queensland who are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children. We know it's incredibly important that we turn our attention to what more government services and organisations who are there for children can do to protect children from the predators and the criminals who are intent on committing some of the most monstrous and heinous acts against our children. We know in Australia, shockingly, that 1 in 4 children will experience a form of sexual abuse before they turn 18, and we owe it to those children to do everything we can to prevent it.

I've been doing this story, Luke, on ABC radio, I reckon, for nearly 25 years now. Have we improved at all?

We have. And what we actually do see is that we do see significantly less experiences of institutional sexual abuse than we did, and we kind of have the Royal Commission to thank and the actions that have resulted, as well as the public awareness and the commitment to preventing these horrendous acts. But we know that there is more that we need to do, and we know that there is a significant amount of attention that we have to play. One of the biggest challenges in Queensland is we have become so focused on reviewing and fixing one part of the system that we've let all those other important parts slip.

My guest is Tom Allsop. Tom, I think I just called you Luke, so my apologies for that. No worries. So what would you expect to come out of this inquiry, given all that has been done and there has been improvement in institutions, what would you expect or what would peak care workers expect to come out of this inquiry by Luke Twyford.

So what we're expecting is to actually recognise and really value the fact that we need to do a whole lot more than just rely on one worker screening system to keep our children safe. We know in Australia that the work of screening systems that we have, which are important, are only really one of ten things that the Royal Commission recommended that we can do to put in place, like to give your listeners a bit of an analogy for that. It's trying to fix road safety by only ever focusing on improving the way that we issue driver's licences. You've also got to fix the roads and you've also got to educate drivers, and that's what we've got to do within our systems. We've got to do all those other things that keep children safe, because worker screening systems are great for preventing the second crime, but you've got to have people commit the first one in order to identify them. And that's way too late for what we need to have in place. So we know that we need to address the structural flaws that are well known in the blue card system, those flaws that will allow people to move between organisations and across states to continue committing horrendous crimes, that there's really important things that we need to do through the implementation of child safe standards and a reportable conduct scheme in Queensland that will make a significant difference. And it has saddened me for years that Queensland is one of the last states to accept and commit to implementing child safe standards and reportable conduct. So now that we have.

Why do you think that is? Why do you think that is, Tom?

I think there has been too much focus on both the interrogation and blame of one part of our system, without a genuine commitment to the funding and the intentionality that's needed to look at the whole system about protecting children, tens of thousands of organisations and workers who are turning up every day kind of are there to protect our children. The screening system is an important element and often gets the majority of our focus, but it has taken years for government to commit. They committed very quickly following the response and the reaction to the Ashley Paul Griffith case, and we did see the passing of legislation late in the term of the previous government. So we're now calling on the current government to continue at haste, implementing the child safe standards and reportable conduct, because we know that as soon as that's in place, that's going to be the safeguards we need currently that's not set to commence until 2026. And for early education, which is going to be a significant focus of this review and inquiry that commences in 2027.

Tom Allsop from PeakCare is my guest, Tom. In the case of Ashley Paul Griffith, he committed his offences over a two decade period, which is just astounding. 300 charges that we know of. Um, is there anything that we should be doing to assist childcare centre workers to pick up people like? Apparently he was extremely clever, very strategic, very manipulative, you know, was able to hide what he was doing, even though there were sort of monitoring systems in place in different places. Is there anything we can do to assist childcare workers to be more questioning alert, you know, because they're usually there because they love kids, they love working with kids, you know, they enjoy the process. It's a happy place. My daughter went to a childcare centre. It was one of the happiest moments of her life. But they need to also be strategic managers somehow in this, don't they?

absolutely do and they absolutely need that support. And I want to recognise that we have some amazing early education workers in Queensland, thousands of workers who are doing everything they can. And I dropped my children this morning to some of those amazing workers. And I trust in Queensland. Parents trust that they are going to do the right thing, but they need to be supported with the education, the awareness raising, the systems. Right now, in the absence of a reportable conduct scheme in Queensland, we don't have a mechanism for those workers to be able to surface those enduring concerns, those kind of gut feelings that say something is not right here in the same way that other states can. We know that there's.

You often get a sense of something, but you don't have necessarily evidence sometimes, do you? But you get a sense that something's not right.

And that's right. And look, and so much of keeping children safe is about kind of sitting in that gut, instinctual feeling of something is not right here. What can we do to ensure that we are protecting children particularly. And we have to acknowledge that at the heart of this are monstrous individuals committing heinous acts against children. Our children deserve to be protected, but we need to ensure that those people who are committed to looking after our children are equipped with the systems and the resources and the training and the environments that we need, which means that people aren't left alone with children, that their phones are not in these centres. It recognises that what we do in Queensland needs to be consistent, because when you have people moving between states, their history can get lost between systems that don't talk to each other. So there is so much more that we can do. And at the heart of it is recognising all of those thousands of workers who turn up every day to keep children safe and empowering them to do the work they can do with the right systems they need.

There's a thing in Australia called COAG, the Council of Australian Governments, which is where the states get together to solve these sort of problems of federation. Have they not dealt with this yet? Has that not happened yet?

There is. And the commitments that were made to the principles of child safe organisations did many years ago kind of go through it following the Royal Commission. What we are seeing is the inconsistent timing and application across states and territories with state based systems. What we're also seeing is a lacking a lack of genuine commitment to transformative reform in our systems. We know if we look back over the last decade that there's been more than 3000 recommendations to improve child protection in Australia and dozens of inquiries and reviews that constantly look at the same six themes. What we are seeing, though, is that if

we're only ever looking back to try and address and kind of bolster up the systems that we have, we're never going to be able to seize the opportunity about the fact that we are as a country and as a state, so different in the last ten years than where we were, and we're always looking backwards to try and improve what's gone wrong. We're not looking forward to seize the possibility of all the new stuff that we have. So we've got to be capable of doing both, and we sometimes get lost in a thousand recommendations from the last ten years, when it's about looking to the future, to say how many of those are now relevant, because a lot changes in a decade.

Appreciate your observations. Tom Allsop, thanks very much.

Thanks for your time.

Tom Allsop chief executive

Released under RTI - DPC

Station: ABC Radio Brisbane
 Program: Afternoons
 Compere: Kat Feeney
 Interviewee: Buranda State School Principal Simon Vaseo
 Date: 6 November 2024, 3:22pm
 Duration: 7mins 50sec

E&OE

KAT FEENEY:

Hands up. Who likes going to school? Anyone? Mm. Just as I suspected. Maybe, maybe you loved turning up to school most days when you were little. Maybe you know now as a parent, the all too present challenge associated with kids who don't want to go to school. But what about the teachers? Did you feel motivated, recognised by the teachers you met once you went to school? Well, look, this school's got 259 students. It's only a couple of clicks from Brisbane's CBD. Simon Vaseo is in his 12th year as principal there. The school I'm talking about is Buranda State School and Simon, according to this survey that's been published 100 per cent of everyone's pretty happy 100 per cent of the time. Or am I mischaracterising you, Simon? Hello and welcome. And what's happened?

SIMON VASEO:

Thanks, Kat. It's lovely for you to ask us to speak this afternoon. And our students completed, from years 4 to 6, completed the school opinion survey, which is put out by the Department of Education to schools and teachers, students and parents complete the survey, which is all online now. And we have a very solid response from our kids here and our parents and our staff in terms of the number of people who complete the survey. And our student results around their opinions about the school have been very positive, as they generally are. And this year, our students were really very keen to share what they liked about the school and what makes them happy.

KAT FEENEY:

And what do they like about the school and what makes them happy?

SIMON VASEO:

They like the support that they get from their teachers. I think the relationships that teachers build with their students here, like everywhere in schools, everyone tries to make school enjoyable. And students really highlighted that, you know, their teachers will go the extra mile for them and support them and help them to learn and help them out to sort problems out when they come along. And that, you know, building strong relationships really is number

one in schools. And obviously our students feel like we're doing that well and they're happy. So I think that those results sort of speak to the work we do and that it's working.

KAT FEENEY:

I mean, it's, it's phenomenal. You deserve all the pats on the back, Simon, because what we're talking about here is a survey undertaken by students. And you returned, they've returned a 100 per cent happy result. 100 per cent! That's tremendous. You must be delighted.

SIMON VASEO:

It's pretty good, isn't it?

KAT FEENEY:

Yeah, even by my poor maths I know that's pretty good, Simon. So, I mean, this must be difficult because, look, you've been principal there for 12 years.

SIMON VASEO:

It's actually 14. I...

KAT FEENEY:

14?

SIMON VASEO:

I realised recently that I miscalculated, but I'll blame my age on that.

KAT FEENEY:

That's okay. It happens to the best of us. The thing is, you know, in respect of that, you've been at the school 14 years. So that's 14 years of sort of devoted concentration to the staff and the students of Buranda State School. But I'm sure you probably cross paths with other principals. You probably, you know, talk with peers. So can you give me a sense perhaps, Simon, and this is where you get full permission toot a trumpet here, what is it that you're doing differently to other schools?

SIMON VASEO:

Oh, one of the main differences here is that we try and teach our students how to think well, and we do that through what we call, it's philosophy in the classroom program, but basically, we're getting kids to learn how to think as well as they can for themselves and how to engage in, you know, sharing their ideas and having discussions with other people, their classmates, their teachers, part of that. So it's really around thinking well, working hard making good choices, and most importantly, being kind.

KAT FEENEY:

Tell me about that thinking well. Can you express that to me? Like you might express it to a year three student, Simon? What does that mean?

SIMON VASEO:

Well, questions that we discuss really come from the students. So we'll, you know, present them with something to think about. Often it'll be a story. And they're looking for the themes in that story that make them wonder about something that they're not sure about. And they'll raise it, they'll raise a set of questions around that. And then from there, the teacher who's very well skilled in guiding these discussions, will lead the kids through discussions around big problems. It could be around, you know, what does it mean to have a good life? What does it mean to be fair? How do we be good friends? Things like that. And then through thinking and discussing these questions, we ask our kids to reflect on their own thinking and the thinking of others. And hopefully that leads to them actually acting the things that they find important out in their lives not just at school. And I also think that, you know, if our classrooms centre around thinking and we try to exercise our thinking as best we can, then that's going to benefit everything that we do here.

KAT FEENEY:

Yeah. I'm liking the sound of it. 3:25. 612 ABC Radio Brisbane is where you find yourself. My name is Kat and you're with Simon Vaseo, who for the last 14 years has been principal of Buranda State School. According to the most recent survey of student satisfaction, happiness, 100 per cent of the kids of the 259 pupils at the school were happy with the school. That's a remarkable result. So philosophy from prep is pretty special. And Simon was this, was this something that you introduced? And why do you think it was necessary?

SIMON VASEO:

Oh look, our previous principal was the person who introduced the program to the school about 20, probably nearly 25 years ago actually. Pardon me. And at the time, we were really sort of thinking about the type of person that we were, you know, sending off to high school and sending into the world and how we could best help them. And I suppose the thing in my time in education is that the world that we thought that we were preparing our kids for is kind of here. And, you know, the world's quite complex now and communicating with people so much easier and we can get ourselves into lots of trouble really quickly with mobile devices and all that sort of stuff. So if we're able to be, you know, thinking first and being critical about what's presented to us and more importantly, how we actually, you know, relate to other people and be kind to others that they're really life skills that are going to set us up really well for whatever we choose to do. And, and the other side, I suppose, is that, you know, if we can really tap into our intellect and we can think as well as we can, then we can, you know, we've got some opportunities in our lives to do the types of things that we want to do. Whether it be work or, you know, recreation or study and those types of things. And that's, I guess, really, you know, that hasn't changed in my time here. It probably hasn't changed a lot over the last 25 years, but it still works. And if you talk to people about philosophy, you know, the ideas of, you know, ancient philosophers and more modern philosophers, um, sort of stand the test of time.

KAT FEENEY:

Don't they just. Simon Vaseo, a real pleasure to speak with you this afternoon. Again, congratulations on that extraordinary result. 100 per cent of the students at Buranda State

School happy to be at school, happy with the school. Well done. Pat on that back and gold star, Simon. Well done.

SIMON VASEO:

Thanks a lot, Kat. Pleasure to talk to you.

KAT FEENEY:

Thank you.

[ENDS]

Released under RTI - DPC

Station: ABC Radio Brisbane
 Program: Mornings
 Compere: Steve Austin
 Interviewee: PeakCare CEO Tom Allsop
 Date: 22 January 2025
 Duration: 10mins

E&OE

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We have. And what we actually do see is that we do see significantly less experiences of institutional sexual abuse than we did, and we kind of have the Royal Commission to thank and the actions that have resulted, as well as the public awareness and the commitment to preventing these horrendous acts. But we know that there is more that we need to do, and we know that there is a significant amount of attention that we have to play. One of the biggest challenges in Queensland is we have become so focused on reviewing and fixing one part of the system that we've let all those other important parts slip.

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Tom Allsop from PeakCare is my guest, Tom. In the case of Ashley Paul Griffith, he committed his offences over a two decade period, which is just astounding. 300 charges that we know of. Um, is there anything that we should be doing to assist childcare centre workers to pick up people like? Apparently he was extremely clever, very strategic, very manipulative, you know, was able to hide what he was doing, even though there were sort of monitoring systems in place in different places. Is there anything we can do to assist childcare workers to be more questioning alert, you know, because they're usually there because they love kids, they love working with kids, you know, they enjoy the process. It's a happy place. My daughter went to a childcare centre. It was one of the happiest moments of her life. But they need to also be strategic managers somehow in this, don't they?

absolutely do and they absolutely need that support. And I want to recognise that we have some amazing early education workers in Queensland, thousands of workers who are doing everything they can. And I dropped my children this morning to some of those amazing workers. And I trust in Queensland. Parents trust that they are going to do the right thing, but they need to be supported with the education, the awareness raising, the systems. Right now, in the absence of a reportable conduct scheme in Queensland, we don't have a mechanism for those workers to be able to surface those enduring concerns, those kind of gut feelings that say something is not right here in the same way that other states can. We know that there's.

You often get a sense of something, but you don't have necessarily evidence sometimes, do you? But you get a sense that something's not right.

And that's right. And look, and so much of keeping children safe is about kind of sitting in that gut, instinctual feeling of something is not right here. What can we do to ensure that we are protecting children particularly. And we have to acknowledge that at the heart of this are monstrous individuals committing heinous acts against children. Our children deserve to be protected, but we need to ensure that those people who are committed to looking after our children are equipped with the systems and the resources and the training and the environments that we need, which means that people aren't left alone with children, that their phones are not in these centres. It recognises that what we do in Queensland needs to be consistent, because when you have people moving between states, their history can get lost between systems that don't talk to each other. So there is so much more that we can do. And at the heart of it is recognising all of those thousands of workers who turn up every day to keep children safe and empowering them to do the work they can do with the right systems they need.

There's a thing in Australia called COAG, the Council of Australian Governments, which is where the states get together to solve these sort of problems of federation. Have they not dealt with this yet? Has that not happened yet?

There is. And the commitments that were made to the principles of child safe organisations did many years ago kind of go through it following the Royal Commission. What we are seeing is the inconsistent timing and application across states and territories with state based systems. What we're also seeing is a lacking a lack of genuine commitment to transformative reform in our systems. We know if we look back over the last decade that there's been more than 3000 recommendations to improve child protection in Australia and dozens of inquiries and reviews that constantly look at the same six themes. What we are seeing, though, is that if

we're only ever looking back to try and address and kind of bolster up the systems that we have, we're never going to be able to seize the opportunity about the fact that we are as a country and as a state, so different in the last ten years than where we were, and we're always looking backwards to try and improve what's gone wrong. We're not looking forward to seize the possibility of all the new stuff that we have. So we've got to be capable of doing both, and we sometimes get lost in a thousand recommendations from the last ten years, when it's about looking to the future, to say how many of those are now relevant, because a lot changes in a decade.

Appreciate your observations. Tom Allsop, thanks very much.

Thanks for your time.

Tom Allsop chief executive

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Event: Press conference

Speaker/s: Premier David Crisafulli
Attorney-General Deb Frecklington
Women's Legal Service Queensland CEO Nadia Bromley

Airdate: 3 December 2024, 11:25am approx.

Duration: 42mins

E&OE

PREMIER:

Morning, everybody. Today, it's my pleasure to confirm \$142 million in new money for community legal services in Queensland. It's a vital initiative, and it's made even more vital because it unlocks significant funding amount of money through the Commonwealth Government. \$827 million in fact, from the Commonwealth Government. I want to pay tribute to the way that Deb has done these negotiations, and she can unpack how this come about. But make no mistake, this is vital money for a vital sector to assist vulnerable Queenslanders.

We're talking about people who are impacted by things like elder abuse, health justice and, for the first time, family prevention of violence. And it's important that we give an opportunity for every Queenslander to get justice, and that's what community legal services is about. And it's important that as part of any justice system, that people are entitled to be able to get representation. And that's the work that people like Nadia do day in, day out. We want to acknowledge the way that you've worked with us. We're very, very grateful for that. But to the broader sector, we understand the work that community legal does on a shoestring budget, and this enables that work to continue. And I want to thank Deb for what she has done.

I'll make this point. Without the work in a short period of time from the Attorney-General, there is every likelihood that groups that provide a service for the most vulnerable would have fallen through the cracks. And I want Queenslanders to understand we are serious about a legal system that is fair and enables representation. And I want to thank you for the work that you have done.

Before I hand over to Deb, I want to make some comments about today's public hearing as part of the Making Queensland Safer laws in Townsville. It is very important that that hearing made its way to North Queensland. Townsville has been ground zero for the youth crime crisis, and we wanted to make sure that North Queenslanders know that we have listened to them. We have reflected on the challenges that that community is going through at the moment. And make no mistake, recent weeks and recent months has tested the North Queensland community, particularly Townsville, and it's an opportunity for them today to put forward their views about the challenges that lie ahead.

The laws are being delivered as promised. The timeline is being followed as promised. Victims of crime are being put front and centre as promised. Separate to that, we have a strong will to do gold standard early intervention, and it is going to be funded in Queensland like never before. Separate to those laws, we are going to do rehabilitation to a level that we have never seen before, and that's when a young person is in jail, but that's also when they are released, and I have never stood before you and not spoken about all of those elements.

It is important that you have a system that provide consequences for actions, and you have to do that, particularly for those hardcore repeat offenders, but good systems provide justice and opportunity for those early on in that journey or when they are released from prison. And it is important that we have the services that are in place. And when I reflect that in Queensland at the moment, the majority of young offenders who leave prison don't even have access to a 72 hour plan, is it any wonder that the rate of repeat offending is north of 90 per cent? And we are going to do everything we can to provide education and structure and connectivity when a person is serving time and when they leave prison, 12 months of rehabilitation, six months intensive, 12 months overall, to give people the opportunity to turn their life around as well. Deb.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Thank you very much. Premier. Well, today I'm really pleased to be here at the Women's Legal Service, along with Nadia Bromley, who is the CEO of this incredible legal service, providing a service to Queensland's most vulnerable. But today is a big day for this sector. It's because the new Crisafulli Government has come in and saved the sector by promising and committing \$142 million of extra funding. What that funding has enabled us to do is keep the doors open of these vital sectors, of these vital services, providing that incredible service to people who are our most vulnerable.

Now, within a fortnight of having this job, I had to go down to Canberra to... I'll start that again, because we were actually in Melbourne. I had to sit around a table with the Federal Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus and other Attorney-Generals to fight for Queensland's fair share of over a billion dollars worth of funding for this sector. Now, what did the former Labor government do? They failed to fight for the funding. They failed to put any money into the forwards for community legal services.

Now, these are services who do the hardest work for our most vulnerable women, suffering domestic violence, elderly, needing advice children, people that are suffering from family violence. Make no mistake, these services are required by, by the people of Queensland, but also it was only our government that was able to secure that funding, thereby enabling that flow on effect for the national funding. So over a billion dollars of funding for this vital service.

And I really want to thank the Premier for being so accommodating to ensuring that we could put that extra \$140 million on the table. If we had not have put that extra money on the table, we would not have secured the extra \$800 million for this vital sector. So the former Labor government left a big black hole for the legal sector, and that is not good enough, and that is exactly why the Crisafulli Government has stepped right in to support community legal

services and centres, just like the vitally important Women's Legal Service that we're at here today. So Nadia, over to you.

NADIA BROMLEY:

Thank you so much. Attorney-General and Premier, thank you so much for joining us here today. The signing of this agreement and the announcement of funding is a really important thing. It's a really important thing for the sector, because what it means is that thousands of workers who support the most vulnerable Queenslanders know that their work is valued. They know that they have a job, job security for the next five years, and more importantly, they can get back to focusing on what they do best. Here at Women's Legal Service Queensland, what it means for us is that we can now focus all of our energy on the 7000 women we'll help before this new agreement starts on July next year. And it will also help in helping us achieve our mission of safer futures for women and children. In Australia and certainly in this great state of Queensland, we believe that access to justice shouldn't depend on your postcode or your pay check, and this agreement is a critical step to making sure we can make that a reality for all Queenslanders. Thank you so much.

REPORTER:

Nadia, is there a specific dollar amount that Women's Legal Service will get from this funding?

NADIA BROMLEY:

I'm certain there is, but I'm just not aware what that is at this stage. It's a very difficult process, as I understand it.

PREMIER:

Thank you, Nadia, thank you very much. Over to you guys.

REPORTER:

Premier, on the youth justice situation, have you figured out the mandatory isolated periods and the length of time you'll be holding young people?

PREMIER:

No. No. Good, good question. That, that work will take considerable time. So it's the same, it's the same rules that exist at the moment in terms of how they'll be accommodated. The difference will be, if they assault somebody, if they assault a prison officer, there will be a period where that person will be taken away from their peers, but we're going to do considerable work on that. And I said, I said during the campaign, that that is something that we'll be consulting widely with. That will take, that will, that will take, that consultation will take some time.

REPORTER:

Premier, experts from the Human Rights Commissioner to the Law Society lined up yesterday on the Making Queensland Safer laws would not work to make the community safer. So which experts support your government's youth crime laws?

PREMIER:

A lot of Queenslanders, a lot of people at the front line, and a lot of communities that are demanding change. And I reflect on what we are trying to do, and I come back to the importance of not just stronger laws, but also gold standard early intervention and rehabilitation with purpose. But just on some of those commentary, in many cases, it's the same people who led to the same situation for the last decade. We are a different government, and we are taking a different approach that puts victims first, across the spectrum. And I think if you reflect, whilst there will be different views on some elements, there is also been some strong views of support about our desire for early intervention. And there's been a lot of stakeholders who have spoken about the need for rehabilitation. So it's across the board. And you know, I, we, we are, we are doing exactly what we said we would before the election, the laws, the timelines, how we'll work to support victims first and foremost, everything is consistent with how we campaigned. And I think Queenslanders find that refreshing.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] promise to be a government that listens to the experts though.

PREMIER:

Yep.

REPORTER:

The mandate was to make Queensland safer. Experts say this won't do that, so how are you aligning with that?

PREMIER:

Madura, we are doing exactly what we campaigned on, including the timeline.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] experts support these laws and that they will work?

PREMIER:

We took a very firm commitment to the election and, and with respect to some of the different views on one part of our youth crime strategy, it's been the same voices that have led to the laws being weakened a decade ago. We are a different government, and the difference in our approach is victims are front and centre, in every aspect of it. And, and I don't think any reporting is fair without acknowledging that we are also talking about things like residential care and the need to give young people in that system some hope and some structure and some discipline, without talking about Child Safety and the work we're doing there to try and properly resource that department, without talking about early intervention and bringing the best from, that doesn't operate in Queensland, but also doing more of what's here. We took a significant package to the election, both financially and administratively, and we're rolling that out. And again, you are never going to have a situation where you don't have crime. Of course you will. There will always be crime. Our passion and our commitment is to have fewer victims, and the way that you do that is have a system that supports people at all stages of that. So for the hardcore repeat offenders, consequences for

actions, but also a pathway to make sure that we can intercept early, that we can rehabilitate when somebody does go off the rails. All of that is part of a comprehensive plan, and it is exactly the plan we took to the election.

REPORTER:

One of the experts yesterday said that children actually prefer to be, some of the hardcore kids who repeat and offend, they actually prefer to be in youth justice because they get better... their conditions are better than what they are at home, and they say they actually commit crimes to get back into youth justice. So what changes in that? How are you going to change that?

PREMIER:

Well, I saw the comment. The comment comes from a group that is one of the ones we're going to partner with to do the rehabilitation.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

PREMIER:

The one specifically from your story was Fearless to Success. And, and that's an organisation that has received very limited funding, and it's one of the groups that we want to partner with. So there has to be, there has to be a structure for young people in corrective, corrective facilities. At the moment, less than three hours per day of education. That's not good enough. That will change. But it's, it's right throughout. You've, we've, we've got to have structure and discipline and we have to have compassion and love. It's all throughout. It's a broken system at the moment. And I'm mindful that there will be people who view different elements differently, but every Queenslander acknowledges that at the moment, there is youth crime crisis, and we've got to do something about it. And we are fulfilling what we promise people, and that is putting victims first, victims front and centre in all we do, in early intervention, rehabilitation, purpose and consequences for actions, and we're fulfilling that.

REPORTER:

Lawyers say these, lawyers say these laws place further pressure on the watch houses and the detention centres.

PREMIER:

Yeah, it will.

REPORTER:

Do you have any modelling on what will be needed to cope?

PREMIER:

Yes, we've spent considerable time looking at that, and it is a, it's a very valid, very valid point. And there are delays in bringing on some of those additional, that additional capacity, and Laura has been upfront with that. That was part of the incoming brief that she had. The

government, former government hadn't made that public. We have, but so I'll address it in a couple of ways. We promise that these laws would be laws by Christmas, and we acknowledged that will put some pressure on those detention facilities, which is why we have to get in early with early intervention and rehabilitation when a young person leaves. And if we can break the back on that recidivism, which is over 90 per cent, that will help. If we can do early intervention, that will see less people going into the system. If you have stronger laws and send a message around consequences for actions that will act as a deterrent. There are going to be some challenges. There is, but long term we believe we have a system that will create fewer victims and will be good for the longer term community, both for victims and young offenders before they get into a lifetime of crime. There will be some challenges. And you know my view about watch houses, and you know that I don't believe that a watch house is somewhere where a young person should spend weeks that they are at the moment. And we have to do all we can to bring on extra capacity, but we also have to intercept so there are less people getting into that system. And when you have a look at the percentage of young people who are on remand in many of those facilities, that shows you how broken the system is. And that was one of the other things we campaigned on, which is increasing the capacity of prosecution so we can actually get a young person before a court earlier, so that there are those consequences for actions. Because at the moment, what's happening is you've got such a large percentage on remand that by the time they front a court, they don't actually ever experience that consequence. And by being on remand, they're not getting the wrap around services they should. The system is broken right throughout. And we spent a lot of time looking at this, and we've committed a significant amount of money, but also a cultural shift in the way that we treat young people early on and giving them those [inaudible]

REPORTER:

You just said that you did modelling, so how much, what is that number? How many more children will be held in a watch house [inaudible]?

PREMIER:

So there will be, there will be some short term pressures, but we believe long term, we can deliver a system that provides fewer victims, but also better outcomes for [inaudible].

REPORTER:

Will you release the modelling?

PREMIER:

So we... we'll continue too, we'll continue to spend the resources we need to determine where we bring on the extra capacity.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

PREMIER:

So... so... so... no, no no. The modelling shows that there will be pressure early on, when the rules come into place. In terms of... that, that was actually reflected on extra capacity

needed, and it was done based on the facility in Wacol that needs to come online, which is delayed by nearly six months.

REPORTER:

Are you talking, Premier, dozens? Hundreds extra kids?

PREMIER:

No, I'm talking about the need for those extra beds at Wacol to come on and the pressure that will be felt when it's not there. And there's also been some temporary facilities done at Caboolture, which will also need to, we need that capacity. So that there will be some pressure. But our commitment is stronger laws to act as a deterrent, gold standard early intervention to turn young people around and rehabilitation while they're in jail, and when they leave.

REPORTER:

Are you expecting the extra pressure in watch houses over summer?

PREMIER:

There will be extra pressure in the short term, and...

REPORTER:

How long is the short term? Is that summer?

PREMIER:

Well, certainly, certainly in the months ahead, certainly. And the reason why, if I can... this is important, I have to explain this. Five years ago, there was the first revelations of the watch house crisis. Five years ago, and five years ago, the then government said it would do something about the capacity issues, and in the last five years, the number of kids in watch houses has escalated year on year. So it will take time. But my, my strong belief, is that a watch house is not where a young person needs to be long term, because it's very difficult to turn your life around when you're spending 23 hours a day without any sunshine, which is why we have to bring on the extra capacity, and we will. And I've also, we also campaigned on what we called circuit breaker sentencing, and I think that's a really good midway point where there is a, an ability for a custodial sentence that looks and feels different to a traditional jail. Those rural outposts. That will be another string to the bow. That'll take time, but we're going to bring that on. Everything we're doing is coordinated and structured and has a plan. And things won't improve overnight, but they are going to get better, and the community is going to be safer. And there is a road map that deals with that. The first step is, as we promised, stronger laws by Christmas, and then there's the rollout of early intervention, rehabilitation with purpose, and then fixing those broken arms of government.

REPORTER:

Premier, do you... opting to take preference over the rights of the child here in Queensland, it's not just your government, but the previous government passed harsher laws, overwrote

the state's *Human Rights Act* to implement those harsher sentences on children. Are we treating children, are we treating policy, you know, with preference over the rights of a child?

PREMIER:

Fraser, everything I've campaigned on and everything we've said focuses on consequences for actions, but also the structures to turn a young person's life around. And the only comment I'll make about the former government is, they took a conscious decision that created this mess, and still, as of today, I'm not sure there's a Queenslander that knows what their position is. It gets... there's no consistency in what they're saying. There's no acknowledgement about the problem. We've still got, we've now got a former MP who's casting doubt over the authenticity of the person who replaced him and the person who replaced him ran for public life because of one of the most incredible tragedies the state seen, and still we've got chirping from the sideline. Look, I'll park that. I just want, I just want to say our focus is right throughout the system, and we will roll that out in a calm and methodical way.

REPORTER:

Just on those groups that have been critical of the laws in the last day and weeks and were critical of the former government in this space as well, some of which are statutory, independent statutory authorities. Are you saying that their analysis or their view on this is wrong?

PREMIER:

Well, Matt, they have a different view, and they should be able to express that view. They should be able to and that's part of the democracy that we live in, and that should be. I just make the point that we are fulfilling exactly what we campaigned on, and it's not just stronger laws. And I think you will reflect there's been, during the course of the campaign, there was a lot of, a lot of third parties who also spoke about what we were talking about, early intervention and the rehabilitation element as well.

REPORTER:

In terms of the Townsville committee meeting today, there are some locals who are saying that's simply not enough time to have all the voices heard. There's calls for other regions to have a seat at the table as well. Obviously, there's been previous committees. Do you think more needs to be done in that space to get that community voice on the table?

PREMIER:

We, we committed that these laws would be laws by Christmas. We committed the period that they would go to committee. And we are fulfilling that. And we are determined to make sure that there's consequences for actions and then also early intervention. So we, we're fulfilling exactly what we took to people, to the people of Queensland. And I know, I know that's not a sexy, sexy headline, 'Politician keeps promise' but that's, that's my style. And we are doing exactly what we said we were going to do. We outlined, we outlined the key elements that would form part of Adult Crime, Adult Time. We outlined exactly the funding bucket for early intervention. We spoke exactly about rehabilitation with purpose in jail and outside of it. And we are fulfilling to the letter of the law. The laws, the timeline, priority for

victims and how we're going to deal with early intervention. We're fulfilling exactly what we said.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] having these hearings if you're only ever going to go with what you took to the election?

PREMIER:

Well, but the hearings are an important part of an opportunity for people to come forward. And Matt just raised...

REPORTER:

But you're not taking them into account so what's being [inaudible]?

PREMIER:

Well... well... well... the, the Attorney General is here and reflected on what was yesterday. And there's an opportunity today. There's an opportunity for people to put submissions. But just bear in mind, we said that there would be the laws in place by Christmas. And I made the point to you, we are not going to Christmas with the same youth justice laws that have led us to where we are, and we're working overtime on early intervention and rehabilitation as well. So it's some of, some of the most, some of the highest profile and chilling incidents in youth crime have happened over that period. Boxing Day. Australia Day. There's been, there's been some, some really troubling ones. And again, no one is suggesting that you won't have... these crimes will... these crimes exist. My focus is reducing the likelihood of a repeat, hardcore person who shouldn't be out, to not be. And to intercept the next generation, to stop them from becoming...

REPORTER:

So do you expect there to be changes to the legislation based upon the hearings?

PREMIER:

The hearings are taking place at the moment, and you've got a committee process that will be putting forward suggestions, and the committee will then collectively put forward their views as well. Now we are fulfilling what we said we, we took to the election, but any good committee process can allow people to have a suggestion. But, but just to be clear, we campaigned on Adult Crime, Adult Time. We campaigned that it'd be laws by Christmas. We will fulfill that. And if there are suggestions around the further legislative changes, if there are suggestions around other ways of early intervention and rehabilitation in the future, we will. And as I said in the first reading speech the other day, this is the first of future changes when it comes to making community safer. The next cab off the rank will involve the child sex offender register as well.

REPORTER:

Premier, what are some of the pressures... can you spell out some of the pressures that you're expecting from the new laws?

PREMIER:

Well, there'll be, be the, there will be the ability for the judiciary to impose sentences that more accurately reflect what the community's expectations are.

REPORTER:

But what are some of the pressures that you mentioned, the short term pressures?

PREMIER:

More young people in custodial sentences, given custodial sentences, which is why the perfect time to have built extra capacity was five years ago. The next best time is today, and we're doing what should have been done. And we're also looking at other options into the future.

REPORTER:

So what you doing to, what are you doing to prepare for that overcrowding over summer?

PREMIER:

I mentioned to you. We, the Minister is doing everything she can to deliver the extra capacity online. We are continuing with the Caboolture arrangement to make sure that that's there in in capacity. And we are working on future things, on future opportunities, and the circuit breaker program. And above all, the greatest thing we can do is intercept so there are less young people in the years to come who need to be put in jail. Because ultimately, our first priority is for victims, and the best way to have fewer victims is to have fewer people offending. And if you can intercept early and help turn people around, everybody wins on that.

REPORTER:

Premier, we have some more questions on rooftop solar.

PREMIER:

Yeah.

REPORTER:

How advanced your emergency backstop plans to deal with the more unstable grid thanks to excess solar?

PREMIER:

Our priority is the maintenance guarantee that we have implemented to make sure that we have the base load capacity that the state needs. And our commitment is energy that's affordable, reliable and sustainable. And there are some huge challenges at the moment with the grid, some huge challenges. They're not going to be fixed overnight, but the starting point is to make sure that the assets that the state own at the moment get back to their capacity. And as we bring on more assets that can also be part of that energy mix. But to have those publicly owned assets, which will remain publicly owned assets, but to have those publicly owned

assets working to provide base load power is essential. And the people at those GOC's should be held accountable for keeping, for making sure that that money is spent, that maintenance guarantee is spent, and so too will the shareholding ministers. And the Treasurer has given good visibility, as has the Minister for Finance on that.

REPORTER:

Premier, do you have any concerns that network operators might have to take control to manage households rooftop solar if the grid can't be secured?

PREMIER:

The grid has to be secured, and I'm mindful there's some national conversation there, but for Queensland's, from Queensland's perspective, we have to get the assets that Queenslanders own operating the way they should. And for well over a thousand days, that hasn't been the case, and our maintenance guarantee will make sure that we do get it back online, and we keep them online, and we get them working for Queenslanders. Their first duty is to drive down the price of power for Queenslanders and give them reliability. And right now, the grid is under immense pressure, and we have to do everything we said we're going to to make sure that that pressure in the years to come is reduced.

REPORTER:

One more quick one. Will you offer incentives to Queensland households to purchase batteries in a bid to soak up excess supply from rooftop solar?

PREMIER:

We've spoken about solar for renters, and that's something which we want to give opportunity for, for people to benefit. In terms of, in terms of battery storage, I'm mindful that those prices are becoming more competitive. We'll consider those, we'll consider partnerships with that in the future. We do believe that there is a, there's a, there's a big role for renewable to play in Queensland, both domestically and more broadly. But if you don't have base load power underpinning that system, it is, it is just too vulnerable to the ebbs and flows of weather conditions and the market. You need, you need base load power, and you need renewables as part of that.

REPORTER:

So you will be considering incentives for batteries into the future?

PREMIER:

We haven't, we haven't considered it yet. But what I'm saying is we will look at, we'll look at anything that can help firm up a system. But we haven't considered that.

REPORTER:

Premier, do you concede that the new laws [inaudible] will adversely affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are already marginalised and overrepresented in our prison system? How would you handle that? How will that be culturally appropriate as well?

PREMIER:

We have to do more for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland, and not just in the justice system. And the greatest way we can do that is by making sure that they have access to an education and health system and housing and giving the structures to keep them on the straight and narrow like other kids. You're right, there is an over representation, and we collectively have a duty to do all we can to try to help First Nations people. We must. We must. The laws are in place for everybody, and people will be treated equally, but collectively, we've got a duty to try and help early for a vulnerable group of people and, and that's, that's important. And I particularly talk about in those communities, I always come back first and foremost, to the disadvantage in the communities, because ultimately, that's where the disadvantage is most pronounced. And the ability for someone to achieve what they are capable of when they're growing up in a household where our overcrowding is four or five times what it should be, where the ability to get an education and the attendance rates are less than what they should be, and there's no aspiration in the society to be able to own a home. All of those things underpin a society of disadvantage, and we do owe it to, to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to do what we can, to give, to close that gap. In terms of the laws, the laws are there for everyone, but the systems should make sure that we give every chance for those who are vulnerable and marginalised to be given justice and the ability to turn their life.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] on Aboriginal Affairs, were you happy with the way that the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry was wound up? I mean, Josh Creamer didn't hear from you prior to or since, and yeah, do you think you could have handled that better?

PREMIER:

Well, just, just on the since, the Minister wrote to Mr Creamer and offered him a briefing if he wanted to accept that. But I just, I make the point, we campaigned that we would end that process, and that the money that was otherwise going to go to that process would go towards infrastructure, particularly in those indigenous communities. And just to be clear, because I'm not sure if I've been clear enough on this, when I say the money is going to go, every single cent of it. Right? So nothing's nothing from that inquiry is going, there's no consolidated revenue. Every single cent is going to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but particularly in those communities.

REPORTER:

But my question was, do you think you could have handled it better? I mean, you said prior you would shut it up respectfully and...

PREMIER:

Yes.

REPORTER:

... I don't think... I mean, do you think that was respectful?

PREMIER:

Well, well, I'll pose this... I'll pose this question. Would it have been right for us to have allowed the inquiry to spend money on a process that we said would continue, and I think the answer is no. And the, the inquiry decided to continue because the legislation was still in the parliament. The inquiry took a decision to continue that work, despite the fact the government said we would be stopping it. Now, when I reflect that one in two dollars have been spent on lawyers to date, that's not where our priority is. Now, the inquiry made a decision to continue on that process, despite the fact we said that we would, we wouldn't pursue it. Now, to have not closed that loophole, would not have given the signal that the inquiry said it needed. It said it was going to continue while the legislation was still before the House. So we took a decision to, to do that, and now the work begins on where does the first trench of money be spent. Now, my preference is for it to be in one of those 16 discrete communities.

REPORTER:

Is it not true, though, that you could have told the inquiry that, hey, we're going to wind up this legislation...

PREMIER:

But we did, Madura.

REPORTER:

... instead of just... [inaudible] Olympics [inaudible]?

PREMIER:

But Madura, if I may. We, we campaigned on, on the fact that we would be, we'd be stopping that process. There was public commentary that that the inquiry had acknowledged that and then subsequently said that it was going to resume. So that would have meant that money was spent on a process that we said we weren't pursuing. So...

REPORTER:

Did the government give specific instructions, though, for them to stop?

PREMIER:

Well, yeah, over 12 months ago.

REPORTER:

No, but I mean legally like instructions, emails?

PREMIER:

But, but that's...

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

PREMIER:

But that's the reason why, but that's the reason why, that's the reason why the legislation did need to be changed, because the inquiry made a point that because the legislation was still active in the House, that they believed that they should continue. Now, that just cleared that matter up.

REPORTER:

So you thought that was out of line?

PREMIER:

Well, no. I thought that to allow that to continue would have spent more money on more lawyers that we want to spend in indigenous communities. Now, that's a difference of opinion, but ultimately, we clean, we cleared up the legislative grey area.

REPORTER:

But the, but the inquiry wasn't told specifically to wrap up earlier?

PREMIER:

No, the inquiry was told very specifically...

REPORTER:

[inaudible] continue. They weren't given specific instructions.

PREMIER:

No, the, the, the commitment was very clear from a long time ago that we wouldn't be proceeding.

REPORTER:

But the instructions was the difference.

PREMIER:

I don't think there's a Queenslander who wasn't clear about the fact that we weren't pursuing it.

REPORTER:

I guess, the timing of it and the handling is the question.

PREMIER:

But the reason why the timing was what it was is because after ceasing the inquiry, the inquiry decided to start again because the legislation was still before the parliament. Hence the reason why we close that off.

REPORTER:

With respect, did you respectfully call Josh Creamer as you said you would?

PREMIER:

No. The correspondence went from the Minister to Mr Creamer.

REPORTER:

And who is Fiona Simpson? Can you tell us a little bit about her expertise in Aboriginal Services?

PREMIER:

You should ask her about it. She's the longest serving, she's the longest serving member of the Parliament, and I think she'll do good. I think she'll do good.

REPORTER:

Just on your comments around the funding being put straight into the community. KPMG did an audit on Mornington Island a few years ago that looked at funding. I think it was around \$400 million had been spent over five years without actually improving any of the key outcomes around health, housing, child safety. How can you ensure when you're putting money into this, into community, that it's actually gone into programs that the community wants and will use rather than what we've seen previously?

PREMIER:

It's an, it's an excellent question, and one of the figures that I've always quoted in recent times is there was over a billion dollars of additional money spent in the discrete communities on housing alone and the number of dwellings collectively reduced. That is... now, I understand about maintenance. I get maintenance, but that is just a distinct lack of planning, and that is examples of the not delivering value for money with the money that's there, and not treating that money with respect. So you're right. And I come back to, I think it needs to overwhelmingly be driven by local governments. I think they have the mandate from their community. And like all councils, they won't always have blanket support, but ultimately, they're the people who've been chosen for a four year period from their communities, and they're the ones that I want to work with.

REPORTER:

Is that a KPI for Fiona Simpson, to make sure that doesn't happen again?

PREMIER:

For all ministers, not just Fiona. Particularly, you know, I point to housing. Sam's [inaudible].

REPORTER:

Particularly indigenous housing and the waste there,

PREMIER:

Yeah, but Fiona's role will be making sure that every cent of this fund goes towards, goes towards those, to indigenous people. And I shouldn't say blanket just to the communities, because there will be other examples, I'm sure, where there may be other opportunities to fund. But my, my going in position is if that fund could fix up some of the, the water and

waste situations in some of those communities, and if it opened the door to the first round of home ownership in one or two of those communities, I reckon that'd be a pretty big step forward.

REPORTER:

And while, just quickly on the, back to the youth crime committee, sorry the Making Queensland Safer law committee, why weren't police authorised to appear on that committee?

PREMIER:

I'm not sure, Tim. I can...

REPORTER:

[inaudible] intend to proceed with the police integrity unit as recommended by the Richards inquiry?

PREMIER:

I, I'd have to, I'd have to get some info on that. I'm [inaudible].

REPORTER:

You're not sure whether you're [inaudible] recommendation of the Richard's inquiry?

PREMIER:

I, we said at the time that we supported all of those recommendations in principle. But if you're asking me, where it's at at the moment, I don't know. I'm not sure the work for that.

REPORTER:

A question for the Attorney. [inaudible] will you be changing the way that the numbers are measured?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The most important thing we do around victims is ensuring that they go down. I mean, that's exactly what this Making Queensland Safer laws are all about. We need to ensure there's less victims in Queensland, that is our number one priority. It's certainly my number one priority. And in actual fact, for the entire justice system, the priority right now with these new laws is putting victims first, and that's something I'm exceedingly proud of.

REPORTER:

But will you be changing the way that that metric is calculated?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, no. Victims if someone's house gets broken into and an offender holds a knife to their throat while asking for the car keys so they can steal the car to prevent that person going to work as a midwife, that person's a victim. By the way, she's also my neighbour. That's a victim. We're trying to prevent having any more of those cases happening here in Queensland. Like the Premier said, there's always going to be crime. We know that. But we

cannot sit by and do nothing, and that is why we're Making Queensland Safer as we said we would.

REPORTER:

Do you have any update on the release of the Trad, Carne or Chao Thai Fook reports?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Great questions, and I'm certainly being briefed by my department in relation to the release of those. One thing I have done in in regards to the first two reports, we've said, and I spoke in the parliament last week that we'll be strengthening the CCC's reporting powers. We are working through that, and we are doing that. I've met with the Chair of the CCC twice now, and we'll continue to have a path forward for the release of those documents, as we said we would. In relation to the Chao Thai Fook report, we, I'm working as well on that. I'm going through the briefing and the reports and the legal issues that surround the release of that. We will be releasing it in time. We just need to ensure that there aren't any outstanding legal issues in relation to that release.

REPORTER:

Is there any further details you can give about the Ashley Griffith inquiry? You released that statement on Friday.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Yeah, look great question, Brendan. And that is one of, and I said on the weekend, one of the most horrific matters that, you know, I think Queenslanders were just sickened to their stomach when they heard about that matter. It is imperative that, as a government, we put our children first, and that is why the Premier announced through the election that we'd have the blue card review, which goes into some of the issues around the supply and then where that blue card holder ends up if they are being investigated or if they're being charged. It is part of our 100 day review. We will meet, sorry, it is a part of our first 100 days commitment. We will meet that commitment. I'm talking with Luke Twyford, the Family Commissioner in relation to that review, and we're settling those terms of reference. And the sooner we get that done, the better but we are just working through that methodically right now, because we must get our terms of reference right if we're going to make a change to the blue card system. Thank you.

[ENDS]

Event: Press conference

Speaker/s: Premier David Crisafulli
Attorney-General Deb Frecklington
Child Death Review Board Chair Luke Twyford

Airdate: 21 January 2025, 11:30am approx.

Duration: 40mins

E&OE

PREMIER:

... it's important for the most vulnerable in our society. And we are going to continue every day of our government to make sure that our focus is on ensuring that people are safe, whether that be at home, at work, at a daycare or a kindy in their streets, every thing we do is about improving community safety for Queenslanders.

Today, I can announce we are launching an inquiry into the broken child protection system in this state. A system that we have spoken about for a long time, a system that we if you go back some of our comments regarding blue cards and the need to ensure that that is a more robust system and enables people who come into action with our most vulnerable to be fit and proper people. And nothing short of getting to the bottom of the broken system will cut it in the eyes of Queenslanders and today we take another step in that journey.

This is fulfilling an election commitment we made, and in a moment, I'll ask the Attorney to speak a little bit more about it. It also follows the horrendous breach of trust that was the situation with Ashley Paul Griffith. A breach of trust that shows how broken the system is, and the need to shine a spotlight to fix it. And today is a step in the journey towards fixing that broken system.

These failures go back many years and whilst we, whilst there's one case in particular that I know you'll, you'll all be very keen to discuss the failures in the child protection system go back many years, and there have been many vulnerable children who have had some of the most horrendous things occur because of that broken system. But when it comes to the case of Ashley Paul Griffith, that was the one that really shocked at home to Queenslanders. It was the most horrific of crimes. It highlighted failures in the system. More of the same isn't going to cut it, and we are taking action. I'll ask the Attorney to say some words.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Thank you very much, Premier. Well, we're here today doing exactly what we said we would do. Now, we said we would do an inquiry into the horrific matter of Ashley Paul Griffiths and the child protection system here in this state. The Blue Card system that has obviously let down many children, many Queensland children and many Queensland parents. So today, we launched the Blue Card inquiry into the child sex exploitation system. This is, like the

Premier has said, one of the most horrendous breaches of trust in the childcare system that this state and in fact, any Australians have ever seen.

And I'm very pleased to be able to announce today that we have Luke Twyford, who is the Chair of the Child Death Review Board, to head up this inquiry. It is important that the Child Death Review Board have the terms of reference to enable them to look into what went wrong, why it went wrong, and how this will never happen again in this great state of ours. It is essential that when parents drop their kids off at childcare or at school, that they know that they are safe, and that is exactly what this review will do and hopefully give confidence back to the parents of Queensland that there is a government in place that have their children as number one here in this state.

Now, years ago, we saw the horrific loss of Tiahleigh Palmer, there was a review into the blue card system by the former Labor government in 2017 which issued 81 recommendations. Now the failures of the former Labor government and the former Labor attorney-generals of D'Ath, Fentiman, then D'Ath again, into implementing those recommendations, have seen why we are here today. That is why it is essential that we have terms of reference for Luke Twyford and the Child Death Review Board to look into what went wrong in in Queensland and what went wrong because of the conduct of Ashley Paul Griffith.

Now we have got the terms of reference, and they'll be available for you, and I know that Luke Twyford will go through that a bit more, but it's important to say that the terms of reference will assist to allow us to look into the laws and the policies and the procedures and practices of what went wrong, what should have happened to enable earlier identification of people putting children in harm's way. It will look into early childhood education, and to police and the Blue Card systems that have operated during the time of Ashley Paul Griffiths offending, and what gaps are in the system and where and how those gaps can be filled. So what I'd like to do now is introduce you to Luke Twyford, and thank him very much for the beginning of this review.

LUKE TWYFORD:

Thank you, Minister, and thank you Premier. It's a great set of responsibilities that I now bear to carry out this review. And I pass on a key message from all Child Death Review Board members that we will take our time to ensure this review is done properly, with the utmost integrity, and to ensure that it produces recommendations that will keep future Queensland children safe. No child should ever experience child sexual abuse, and it's abhorrent that it continues to occur in a modern society.

The Child Death Review Board has special powers to require the production of confidential information and as a first step, I will be seeking information from the Australian Federal Police, Queensland Police Service, and our Department of Education, and that will enable us to produce a chronology of the offending that has occurred, including the places and the employers where failings may need to be looked into. Another key element of the review that I will lead will include the call for submissions from all impacted parties, particularly victims and their families, seeking their views on where policies, procedures, training, legislation and government responses were insufficient or not fast enough for.

This will be a broad ranging review. I am particularly concerned about how we prevent child sexual exploitation in Australia, as well as how we identify, detect and respond to it. Ensuring that our Blue Card system is part of a broader safeguarding system that includes reportable conduct and a child safety standard system, as recommended by the Royal Commission in 2017, is of equal importance to me. I commit to conducting this review with transparency. There will be public information available on the Queensland Family and Child Commission website about status and the progress, and I look forward to briefing you as the process occurs.

REPORTER:

Just on the special powers you were talking about, will there be any sort of protections [inaudible] come forward, will they be given legal protection?

LUKE TWYFORD:

I'm not able to give third parties legal advice, but certainly when I receive information under the *Queensland Family and Child Commission Act*, which is where the Child Death Review Board legislation sits, I am able to protect the confidentiality of that information and not expose that provider to other parties unless legally compelled to do so.

REPORTER:

I guess it's been considered, but the appeal by Griffith won't impede any operation of this investigation?

LUKE TWYFORD:

That's correct. We are very clear and very certain that we will not continue this review or elements of this review if we ever have a sense or receive advice that it will jeopardise the prosecution or appeal process for the person involved. I have a close working relationship with the Director of Public Prosecutions and given that the terms of reference are focused on identifying system, policy, practice and legislative improvements needed, I have confidence to commence this review today and to continue it.

REPORTER:

How long will it take you to complete?

LUKE TWYFORD:

It's a good question. I want to be very clear that we will take the necessary time to do this properly. I want to ensure that we are engaged with international experts as well as national experts. I believe that it can be completed within the course of this year, but I'll be providing regular updates on its status.

REPORTER:

The bulk of child sexual abuse takes place in the home, by a member of the family. Will you be able to investigate that?

LUKE TWYFORD:

So as part of this review, we do want to look at, particularly the Australian Child Maltreatment study that was released two years ago, looking at the prevalence of child sexual abuse. Absolutely, I want to produce a report that identifies how Australia and particularly Queensland can prevent child sexual abuse. That will be part of that terms of relevance.

REPORTER:

Will your review look specifically at the Griffith case?

LUKE TWYFORD:

Yeah.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

LUKE TWYFORD:

Absolutely. So, we are looking at the established facts that are in the public domain, and particularly in the court domain, to prepare a chronology of what has occurred and to identify system, policies, practices and legislation that might need to be improved.

REPORTER:

In the Tialeigh Palmer case as well? Which the Attorney-General mentioned.

LUKE TWYFORD:

It's a good question. So as part of obviously producing the review we're building upon the knowledge that we're already hold both in Queensland Government, but in particular in the Queensland Family and Child Commission. So setting the background context to the prevalence and rates of child sexual exploitation in Queensland, understanding the policies, procedures and legislation that have changed over time, and questioning whether any of those were insufficient to prevent the offending that has occurred will certainly be part of the review.

REPORTER:

When you said earlier, you seek information from QPS, the AFP, Department of Education that relates to Ashley Paul Griffith?

LUKE TWYFORD:

[inaudible]

REPORTER:

Will you be able to consider implementing, [inaudible] to a Daniels law, the Public Register of child sexual abuse?

LUKE TWYFORD:

Can you repeat the question, sorry, I missed the start?

REPORTER:

Will you be able to consider whether the government ought to create a public register of child sexual abusers as the government response to this?

LUKE TWYFORD:

At this stage, the review is broad ranging. We will look at anything that will prevent, detect, or better respond to the incidents of child sexual abuse.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] obviously, haven't started the review yet, have you have anything in particular you want to look at that you think might have been system gaps that allowed Ashley Paul Griffith to abuse so many people over such a long time?

LUKE TWYFORD:

I think this being day one, it's too early to say that. The terms of reference have been crafted to give us as broad a perspective as possible. And I'll be obviously looking at where we are and where Queensland should be into the future. You will note in one of the final terms of reference, it asks the board to consider as part of this review our current legal framework as it exists today. There were important parts of legislation amended in the final sitting of the last parliament to introduce a reportable conduct scheme and a child safe standard scheme, the *Child Safe Organisations Act*. If that had been implemented earlier, would there have been a different outcome, is a critical question that I want to resolve.

REPORTER:

And the Attorney talked about 81 recommendations from the former review. Do you know how many of them have been acted on? Is it concerning that they haven't all been finalised?

LUKE TWYFORD:

It's absolutely concerning when government receives a report with recommendations that there is not an immediate response, either to accept and outline how they will be implemented or to reject them. To have recommendations sitting in abeyance for multiple years is not the best way to produce sound policy, and it doesn't respect the review process. I am a pragmatic commissioner. I understand I can make recommendations that the government might wish to reject, and all I would ask is they do that transparency. The world is far different to 2017. I think if there are open recommendations from them, this review is a great way to retest whether they are still needed and what implementation needs to occur.

REPORTER:

So there were some that weren't...

LUKE TWYFORD:

Absolutely. There are still open recommendations from the Blue Card review of 2017.

REPORTER:

Will your review go as far as looking into what effect that had on the current situation, not implementing those?

LUKE TWYFORD:

I believe there's... yes, there is a terms of reference that asked me to consider the current legislative policy framework in Queensland today and going back into the period of offended would they have made a difference, as well as what more should be done. If one of those open recommendations falls into what more should have been done, I'll be very clear that that is that key finding of the review.

REPORTER:

Attorney, could you just speak to some of those recommendations and how [inaudible]?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, Lydia, it's a great question, and the Commissioner rightfully says that had of those implemented.... if they had been implemented, would have these matters.... and the reason why we're standing here today with a broken child protection system and Blue Card system in this great state of ours. Would we need to be here today if the former Labor government, three attorney-generals being Attorney-General D'Ath, Fentiman, and then D'Ath again, if they hadn't sat on their hands and they actually had looked at the review that they commissioned themselves? The question must be asked, what failures happened because of the failures of a former Labor government? That is just one of the reasons of this review, but the main reason for this review is to protect children in this state of ours.

As a mum, if you're dropping your or dad or grandparent, if you're dropping your child at a childcare centre or at a school or a place of care, you should understand and know that that child is going to be safe. That is what we've got to get to the bottom of here today, and with their terms of reference that are here. Will we look into the failures of the past government? Well, we need to learn from those failures of that past government. They left, I will get back to you on the number, but I understand there's around 20, if not 30, of those recommendations, of those 81 recommendations that were not completed by the former Labor government.

We stand here today because of the failures of the former Labor government. We've had the failures of the former Labor government that put children at risk in this great state. Now we know about the horrific matter that was Tiahleigh Palmer. We also know about inquiries without teeth into other children in the child protection system under the former Palaszczuk and Miles governments. We know that then the former Labor government didn't act on those recommendations.

What we're doing here today is doing exactly what the Premier said we would do. We would do an inquiry into this horrific matter, and also the child exploitation and what has gone on with the Blue Card system, or the failures of the Blue Card system and the child protection system in this state. We'll look at that, we'll see what needs to be done, and we'll get to work and make sure we protect the children of this state.

REPORTER:

Is there the possibility that charges could arise out of this or is this a more system based investigation?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, look, Josh, the inquiry is certainly a system based inquiry looking into what went wrong, what do we need to do better into the future to protect children. If, if any matters arise through any inquiry that would be subjected to charges needing to be laid, well, of course, they would need to be referred to the police, and they would be laid if required. But what we are looking at here is a horrific matter, a horrific matter of a paedophile who was put in front of children who... that... that is not, that is not in question. Ashley Paul Griffiths is one of the nation's, world's worst paedophiles operating here with children in the state. And that's why we need to have these terms of reference to enable us to have a review that can look into broad ranging topics, to enable that we get to the root of the problem and we keep our children safe.

REPORTER:

Is there going to be a deadline for when this report should be delivered?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, look, as the Commissioner said, he will be given all the time that he is required to get to the bottom of this issue, but we will see a report by the end of the year.

REPORTER:

Will the Commissioner hand the report to government departments or [inaudible] published?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, the Commissioner has talked about through the process, you'll be able to go on his website. And I do thank the Commissioner for being so open and transparent in this regard. We'll be putting information, or the Commissioner will be putting information on that website dedicated to this review, and by the end of the year, we hope to be handed that review, that report.

REPORTER:

Are the nature of police investigations and criminal prosecutions subject to review? Police operations when it comes to...

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, it is as, as the Commissioner said, it is very broad ranging, and his first order of business is to be talking to the police department as well.

REPORTER:

How is this going to interact with federal... Obviously, the federal police are involved in investigations not the Queensland Police. Is that going to complicate how we investigate [inaudible]?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

No, look, it is important that we have cross jurisdictional communications with, with other jurisdictions. The one thing I also can, can say today is that I have asked, and it is being this issue is on the agenda for the next SCAG meeting, which is the Standing Council Of Attorneys General. So that will be happening in late February, where this issue and Queensland's review into child exploitation and the Blue Card failings, or the system failings, is on that agenda, and I look forward to discussing it with my other state counterparts and indeed the Federal Attorney-General. Because what I would like to make sure is that all Attorneys General can enable their departments to cooperate as best they possibly can with the Queensland inquiry.

REPORTER:

Is being run through the Commission's budget? Or are you giving extra money?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Look, this commission of inquiry is being covered by the Department of Justice's budget.

REPORTER:

Why did you pick the Child Death Review Board? Obviously no children are actually dead in this terrible incident. Obviously they're not actually...

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, thank God they're not. Thank God they're not. Some children have died, and the Commissioner has huge years of experience, many years of experience in child exploitation. You only need to look at his CV. You only need to look at the work that the Commissioner has done in the Northern Territory in relation to child exploitation. These learnings and this, you know, this type of background is exactly the type of person we need. Luke Twyford is a man of incredible standing. He's the Chair of the Child Death Review Board, and we need to make sure that no children are harmed. And I think we couldn't have got a better person.

REPORTER:

Given the former government didn't implement all the recommendations, are you saying that you will accept all the recommendations that have come to this inquiry?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, look, what I'm saying about the former government is they failed. The former government failed the children of Queensland. The former government have, it could be said, to have let this issue happen, why we're here today. What we have seen is a former government that failed to act on serious recommendations from previous reviews into protecting children who are the most vulnerable of society. Let's have a look at what the Commissioner hands to government, and we'll know more. This is day one of this inquiry. It is a very good day for Queensland. It is a day that Queensland parents can feel reassured that they have a government with, Premier Crisaf... with Premier Crisafulli and Luke Twyford heading up this, this commission of inquiry to make sure we get to the bottom of what went wrong and how we can fix it into the future.

REPORTER:

Are you saying that the former Labor government is in heart to blame for what Ashley Griffith did?

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Well, let's have a look.

REPORTER:

Premier, can we just get you on a couple of other things?

UNNAMMED SPEAKER:

Is everyone done with the Commissioner?

REPORTER:

I have got two more for Luke.

UNNAMMED SPEAKER:

Is it okay we ask these first, and then, sorry guys, then I'll pull the Commissioner out. Thank you.

REPORTER:

Mr Twyford, thank you. Last year the Child Death Review Board said that our current model of detention is quote, not working as intended and that it is not acceptable for any system to fail in its intent so significantly. That was your quote in the report that was handed down.

LUKE TWYFORD:

It was a quote in the board's report, yes.

REPORTER:

How is the board advising government of what can be done to improve detention for [inaudible]?

LUKE TWYFORD:

So we're, I am working closely with the Director-General of the Youth Justice Department and Minister Gerber in relation to youth justice policy. I can see a number of the board's recommendations, and also I would add recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission, around 12 months post release support, around revisiting early intervention design, best practice funding, going to evidence based justice programs. So I can see that the board's work is leading to policy shifts and policy changes. Certainly, I continue to say that detention is not the most effective way to keep the community safe if we want to rehabilitate young people and make them positive members of our society.

REPORTER:

Our detention centres are at capacity or overrun at the moment. Will the two new that are in the pipeline alleviate that pressure do you believe?

LUKE TWYFORD:

I think you're taking me a distance away from the reason why I'm here today. Each year, I produce a Section 40 report on the performance of both the child protection youth justice system. That's included as part of my annual report, and the most recent one was tabled in Parliament, and includes my analysis of demand flows and capacities.

REPORTER:

There are still recommendations that haven't been, from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses, which is 10 years ago and most recent report seven years ago. There are still recommendations from the inquiry that have not been implemented at a federal level. What hope have you got... I suppose, are you confident that government will actually do it? Will actually implement it this, the things you say?

LUKE TWYFORD:

I have absolute confidence that the government will consider and respond to my report, and I think that's as a regulator, all I can ask is that we undertake a honest process of getting to the bottom of what has occurred, of seeking expert input, of talking to people with lived experience and victims around what they think would have made a difference, synthesising all that information and giving government sound advice. But it is the responsibility of elected governments and parliaments to make policy for the state. I absolutely think that our system of federation creates huge challenges for implementing sound policy, and I also think we don't properly across all jurisdictions, recognise the role of families and children and the role of government in creating ecosystems that safeguard and protect our children. Child safety is everyone's business. We need not just the daycare workers and the people that run early childhood centres, child safety officers and government workers to be aware of how to keep children safe. That's why I'm really clear that one of the best outcomes from that review, and I want to acknowledge Bob Atkinson, a proud Queenslander who has driven much improvements for the child safe standards scheme, we have legislation now that will require all Queensland organisations that work with children to become child safe. That legislation will take effect in October of this year. It's one part of building a culture of safety that prevents children from being abused. That's what I want to see, and I want to see all governments collaborating to get that outcome.

REPORTER:

Premier, what are you expecting....

PREMIER:

Well, I should go, I should go Lydia, because we rushed her. And is this your last day?

REPORTER:

My last week. Last week.

PREMIER:

Honestly, you've had more farewells in John Farnham. But anyway, keep going. Over to you.

REPORTER:

Do you support mandatory sentencing for antisemitic and terror attacks?

PREMIER:

Well, let's, let me wait to see what happens at a National Cabinet this afternoon, and I shouldn't comment about what will be discussed before then, but I'll make some generic comments about where things have reached with that. And before I do, I think it's clear that I've been calling this out for some time, and I use one of my first addresses to you to point out how the rise of antisemitic behaviour was, was ripping down the, the moral fabric of us as a society. And what I've seen unfold has wound the clock back a century on antisemitic behaviour in this country. And my message to National Cabinet is we must deal with it in the strongest possible terms. And if that body doesn't well, then Queensland will. I might just leave it there for now.

REPORTER:

What kind of suggestions will you be bringing to National Cabinet?

PREMIER:

Let's let that discussion take place. I think that's the right venue for me to raise my issues with.

REPORTER:

Premier, there were more than 100 calls from Logan, DV related calls to police that were unresourced over the weekend. Is that concerning? Is that acceptable?

PREMIER:

Deeply concerning and deeply unacceptable, and we have to make sure that the system can respond to as many vulnerable people as possible. And that's not happening at the moment for a number of reasons. And I want to make the commitment that firstly, we have to make sure that we've got the laws in place to deal with perpetrators. And the Minister addressed it the other day quite eloquently, but to be clear, there will be GPS trackers fitted in the upcoming financial year. The first roll out of those hardcore dangerous offenders, and not a moment too soon. In addition to that, we have to make sure that the resources are in place to enable police to be able to police this. What's happening at the moment is there, there is just such a backlog in jobs, and police just aren't able to get there. And that's placing more vulnerable and women in vulnerable situations, vulnerable women and children in terrible situations. So we have to embark on reform. And no system will ever be perfect. No one's suggesting it will, but we have to give every opportunity possible to keep people safe. And that involves dealing with perpetrators in a very forceful way and enabling police to be able to get to more jobs and be able to do the job that they signed up to.

REPORTER:

Logan continues to be swamped by calls, 60 per cent being DV. There's been suggestions from the union to break down the barriers of different districts. Is that something that you're keen on addressing?

PREMIER:

Our first priority is ensuring that there are adequate resources with more police, and the second is the laws to be able to get them to do their job. That's the first thing. I've got a very good relationship with the Police Union, and we'll continue to speak, I can assure you. I was with Shane the other day in Mount Isa. And look, Logan is under immense pressure. But it's not the only station where there's a backlog of jobs, and the majority of those jobs are DV and can't continue. And we have to make sure that there are the resources and the laws to enable people to be kept safe. I'm mindful, I'm mindful that we've also had an incredibly high attrition rate amongst the Queensland Police Service, and a big component of it is the burnout, the fatigue and the sense that they aren't able to do their job, and we've listened to that, and I assure you there will be change. Change in the way that dangerous perpetrators are dealt with, and change in the way that we police domestic and family violence to make sure that police are able to do their job with the help from those support agencies.

REPORTER:

Does there need to be a DV Commissioner?

PREMIER:

We're looking at all sorts of, we're looking at all sorts of suggestions that come forward. Our first, first priority is to deal with the attrition rate of police and to fix those laws. That, that's first cab off the rank.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] around the Star? Any position on the Star? Can you tell us whether or not you will consider tax relief?

PREMIER:

I'm, I'm not sure there's confusion in my position. I just don't want to say anything to the market that I could be accused of passing judgment on the viability of a company or not. But I'll say what I've now said consecutively for about a month. I don't have any interest in the corporate suits of Star. Zero. My only focus are on the workers. Now that's a pretty definitive statement, but I don't know the viability of Star. That, that's for them to say. I'm, I'm not sure about that, and none of my comments could be used now or into the future to determine the viability or otherwise of that particular entity last year.

REPORTER:

But Premier, \$1.6 million was given in relief last year. So has the Star come to you, have you had any conversations about continuing that kinds of relief?

PREMIER:

We'll have lots of conversations, provided they're focused on keeping people in, in work, and that involves that building remaining open and for it to be able to serve the purpose that it was initially done, initially set up for. That was always the terms of conditions of that development occurring. There were also other terms of conditions that weren't met. And whilst our focus right now is only on the workers in continuing that operation, there will be a very big focus in the future about what negotiations happen behind closed doors to enable them to not fulfill their bargain that they signed up to. But there, there are others who could furnish you with more information than me on that. Yes, Jack?

REPORTER:

Can you rule out tax concessions for Star? Are you ruling that out?

PREMIER:

I'm not, I'm not making any comment that can in any way be used to suggest that I believe there's any viability, any liquidity issues with the company. But, but again, I'll, I'll be... James, I was very direct with you the other day. So, so here goes to you, Jack. Star's operations is not the focus of the Queensland Government. I'm not on their board. I have no interest in whether or not they that they are a viable entity, whether they are or not. My concern is the people who work for them, and whoever they work for today or tomorrow, whether it's the same company or a different one, whether an administrator is there or not. I just want that place to be opened, and I want as many people as possible to have a job. That's it for us.

REPORTER:

What would you say to Queenslanders, Premier, Queenslanders who believe that offering a tax break to a mega corporation when small businesses aren't offered the same just doesn't pass the pub test?

PREMIER:

Yes. I... I don't know about the viability of Star. I'm only interested in their workers, Harry. I... I'll leave it there.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] governments set conditions in the deal that they initially proposed to Star, one of them was a jobs guarantee, and the other was no bonuses or performance...

PREMIER:

Yeah. Oh, there are others. There are others. There was also...

REPORTER:

Sorry, is that something that you would consider in any sort of tax relief package? There'd have to be a jobs guarantee and no executive bonuses?

PREMIER:

I'm not commenting on any payment to a company that could be used to suggest they're in trouble when then when they haven't outlined to the mark of their position. But I will talk about, more generally, about my view on, on that, where that deal is at the moment. There are job opportunities that weren't created because deals by the company weren't honoured, and a big part of that is because of the militant behaviour of the CFMEU, which made things in the mind of the market far more challenging than what they should have been. And rather than be held to account, that behaviour was rewarded and I'd like to know a little bit more about that, but that's tomorrow's concern. Today's concern is the workers. Not the viability of Star. The workers. That's, that's our only concern today.

REPORTER:

The State Opposition had a presser at the Gold Coast today saying that you're cutting staff from satellite hospitals. Is that true?

PREMIER:

Well, your, your, your role is to allow them to, to pose questions, mine is to answer, and I'll answer it like this. No. Absolutely not. And in the end, the Opposition can only make outrageous claims and continue to be proven wrong time and time again for so long. And the answer that question is no. The answer to many of the desperate pleas have been categorically ruled out, and most of you have seen through that. If, if they want to, if they want to make allegations of things, they have to be able to prove it otherwise eventually, the music runs out for them. We have a commitment around what the former government called satellite hospitals, and it's a few things. One is to properly name them, and work's underway, and you saw in the health audit why that's so important. The second is to bolster the services are there. That's going to take more workers. So that's, that's an important point. We've, we promised to add MRIs and CTS across quite a few of those, and that work is going to be underway. so there will be more staff employed there, but they will be properly named and properly resourced to complement the roles of Queensland Health.

REPORTER:

Why is there a review underway at the moment within Queensland Health into these satellite hospitals, and why have external contractors been engaged to do that?

PREMIER:

We want the facilities that the former government calls satellite hospitals, let's call them what, what they will be, but we want them to be able to operate to the next level. We want them to have increasingly capacity like MRI and CT scanners. We want them to be named so there's clarity to the market. We want them to complement the existing hospital system. Exactly what we said we would before the election. And I keep making the point, the decision making process that we are taking is exactly a reflection of what we said on the other side of the election, and I hope that shows the Queenslanders we serious about providing calm and methodical leadership.

REPORTER:

Just one more on Star. It seems.... [inaudible]

PREMIER:

Two more on Star.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] entire survival strategy hinges on this [inaudible]. Is it in the workers best interest to deny that which would ultimately lead to a [inaudible]?

PREMIER:

The workers interest is for them to be able to have a casino and a facility that operates. I would suggest to you there's not a lot of workers who care what the name of the company is. They just want a job, and we have exactly the same attitude.

REPORTER:

Will there be job losses in the administration though? If they went into administration [inaudible].

PREMIER:

We want the facility to continue. We want an operation to continue. And continuity... that's if something was to happen and, and continuity of service enables growth into the future. If, if the operation can remain open, if whoever owns it is able to then invest in the developments that were promised and were always part of the deal, that will create more jobs. What I don't want to see is a hiatus, if anything wants to occur, that means that working people wouldn't have a job, and that will make it far more difficult for it to mobilise into the future. Those comments don't reflect what my view on the company though.

REPORTER:

If an agreement has to be done with the State Government to keep the casino open, will you promise that that deal will be made transparent? It won't be hidden behind commercial in confidence?

PREMIER:

But we've, we've shown how much with a believer on things being transparent. And I've spoken about the fact that one of my concerns is that a deal that was struck formally around conditions that weren't met were never made public. And I would be, I would be repeating those mistakes if we didn't. So Queenslanders need to know that we will be ensuring that whatever happens there focuses on the workers, and I can assure you, we'll be very transparent in our dealings with Queenslanders....

REPORTER:

When might the decision be made?

PREMIER:

... and that's the big focus. On... a decision, say that again Harry.

REPORTER:

When might the decision on this be made?

PREMIER:

On what?

REPORTER:

On whether or not you're going to, you know, bail them out?

PREMIER:

I'll point back to my earlier answers. Taylor?

REPORTER:

Can you please assure Queenslanders that a serious charge like rape will be included in the next tranche of crime laws?

PREMIER:

Thanks for the question. The independent evaluation panel, submissions are open now, as you know, and that body will be in place ahead of the next parliamentary sitting. It's important that they get to work as we said they would. And there will be many future charges that they will be looking at, many. The first round of the Making Queensland Safer laws were exactly those changes that we committed to Queenslanders. The timeline for delivery was exactly the timeline that we promised to Queenslanders. That two week window of committee, and we passed them before Queensland, before Christmas, exactly as we said. Now there were people who were very critical of that approach, but again, it's what we campaigned on. We then said we would set up an independent evaluation panel in the first quarter of the year. That'll be well and truly met. And then there are future ways of the Making Queensland Safer laws. Now, I've already outlined two of them. One is Jack's Law, and the other is what we're calling Daniel's Law. And the work will begin with that, and the Morcombe's have already expressed their willingness to be part of it. But there will be many changes. But to be clear, that won't be the final change to the Making Queensland Safer laws. There will be many and the difference... there will be many, and there will be significant work that needs to be done across many charges about what, what sentences look like, et cetera. So, so that work will be done. I'll just make this point. The difference between me and my predecessors is I will not spend one day in this office telling Queenslanders that crime isn't an issue and that we can't do better. We will always have to do better. And every day I'm in this role, I can assure you, we will be looking to say, how can we strengthen our laws, how can we improve early intervention, how can we fix the broken arms of government like we're announcing today. Because in the end, when governments can't keep their citizens safe and protect the vulnerable, that's when people lose faith with government. And I'm never going to give people excuses. I'm always going to look to do things better. And you know, there will be times when there are decisions as part of the Making Queensland Safer laws that we would like to see stronger, I'm sure, and we will constantly look at that and reflect and do everything we can to make sure that justice is being done for more people.

[ENDS]

Event: Press conference

Speaker/s: Premier David Crisafulli
Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie
Transport and Main Roads Minister Brent Mickelberg

Airdate: 12 November 2024, 11:40am

Duration: 42mins

E&OE

PREMIER:

Well, good morning, everybody. We want to give you an update today on some of the infrastructure projects in Queensland, the budget blowouts, the influence of the CFMEU, the secrecy and the cover ups. Before we do and we have two explosive bits of information to share with you, I want to start by saying the infrastructure pipeline in this state will be delivered. It must be delivered. We are a growing state and growing states need infrastructure. Schools and hospitals, roads and bridges, they will be done.

And in fact, increasingly, as we look through the figures that are being presented to us, it's clear to me that the only thing that would have stopped these infrastructure projects being delivered was if Queenslanders hadn't changed the government. The pipeline of blowouts, the cover ups and the influence of the CFMEU would have prevented Queenslanders from having the infrastructure of growing state needs. So I want to assure Queenslanders it will be delivered. And the only way that we're going to get a culture in this state where projects are delivered on time and is on budget is if we can hold ministers accountable and change the way that infrastructure is delivered in this state.

I want to walk through some of the steps that we intend to take to ensure Queenslanders know how serious we are about changing the culture of infrastructure delivery in Queensland. Firstly, we are committed to getting to the bottom of Labor's blowouts. When we know, you'll know. And my commitment is to make sure there is transparency in the way that information flows between government and Queenslanders.

Secondly, we are calling out the sweetheart deal that exists between the Labor Party and the CFMEU in this state. It is a C... it is a sweetheart deal that costs Queenslanders in the taxes they pay, in the time they spend with their family. It costs Queenslanders in the rent that they have to fork out. It impacts Queenslanders in every way, in every day, and our intention is to make sure that the influence of the CFMEU in driving down productivity in Queensland becomes a thing of the past. And only if we do that can we get the show back on the road when it comes to delivering projects on time and on budget.

In a moment, the Deputy Premier will expose some of the most damning findings that he has revealed in the last 24 hours, but it shows the culture of bullying and intimidation that has pervaded from the CFMEU and how it has impacted the ability of hard working public

servants to do their job. A culture of cover ups that former ministers knew about, and the way that it has impacted front line staff in being able to create safe workplaces. The influence of the CFMEU runs deep. And the difference between the Labor Party and my government is no one standing before you or in the cabinet owes their existence to the CFMEU. The Labor Party can't say the same.

Thirdly, I want to talk about a blowout that we will reveal today regarding Cross River Rail and Brent will speak to you after I'm finished, but we will today reveal an additional \$494 million in blowouts just on surface works alone. Nearly half a billion dollars and the most damning thing is it was signed off in September. It was signed off in September, and no one from the former government thought that Queenslanders deserve to know about a \$494 million blowout relating to Cross River Rail.

What's more... what's particularly concerning is yesterday, in a bid to try and airbrush history, we had Members of Parliament coming out revealing figures that are categorically untrue and seriously undercooked, to try and get ahead of the game in crab walking away from their record. That is deeply troubling. And to know that the confidence in the ability for Queenslanders to know that figures when they're released should be done with transparency, that has to be called out, and Brent will do that in a moment. While the Labor Party is trying to rewrite history, we're trying to fix their mess, and we will. And that involves transparency and delivering projects on time and on budget.

Finally, before I hand over to Brent, this whole saga is deeply disturbing. The union influence from the CFMEU, the culture of cover ups, the blowouts that will put in jeopardy taxpayers money if it hadn't changed. It's all deeply disturbing. But I want to give Queenslanders confidence these projects will occur and we will change the culture of the way that job sites work. Productivity will return, projects will be delivered, and the biggest risk to that would have been a continuation of a bad government that had pervaded over astronomical blowouts. So to be very, very clear, we are determined to make sure that Queenslanders know that we respect their money. A growing state needs infrastructure delivered ahead of the game, and we will do that on behalf of every Queenslanders. Brent.

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Thank you. Thanks, Premier. Morning all. Brent Mickelberg, Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Well, as the Premier has just said, when we know Queenslanders are going to know what the true state of the projects which are being delivered here in Queensland are. And what's been very clear in the last week, since I've been sworn in, is that Labor have been hiding the truth from Queenslanders. If we look at Cross River Rail, as the Premier noted yesterday, we had two former ministers appear before the media and try to spin the narrative that the blow out on Cross River Rail was \$170 million. To be clear, that \$170 million is just the tip of the iceberg. That is the amount of money required to keep the lights on, on Cross River Rail until the end of December this year.

What they neglected to say, as the Premier just mentioned, is that there are another \$494 million which they signed off on in September before caretaker for additional works in relation to Cross River Rail. That's information that the Labor Party and that those two Members of Parliament have never disclosed to Queenslanders, despite the fact that this was

their decision in September. And you've got to ask the question, if a government is committed to transparency and openness, why the Labor Party chose to withhold that information from Queenslanders. We will not hide that information. We will be open with Queenslanders, and I'm here today to explain what that \$494 million relates to, and I'll also talk about the impact as it relates to Gold Coast light rail as well. Another blowout which occurred under Labor, which they have also chosen to hide.

So the \$494 million as I said, it's the tip of the iceberg. We're confident that there are other areas on Cross River Rail where the blowouts are even worse, and I'm continuing to ask questions and try to uncover the truth as it relates to that project. And I'll be more, more... I'll come back to the people of Queensland with a more fulsome answer with respect to the true cost of Cross River Rail within 100 days of the government being sworn in, as was our commitment.

But the \$494 million relates to upgrades to enable the integration between Cross River Rail and the broader network here in South East Queensland. Things like junctions that are required to make Cross River Rail work. Stabling yards, surface works, train stations in order to be able to enable people to use Cross River Rail. The Labor Party the former government, have chosen to omit this information and not be open with Queenslanders. \$494 million that Cameron Dick and Bart Mellish chose to ignore yesterday when they tried to spin the narrative to get ahead of the story. But the truth is that it's Labor's mismanagement, Labor's sweetheart deals with the CFMEU that have resulted in these blowouts under the former government.

If we look at Gold Coast Light Rail, and we're looking at a \$330 million blowout. Now, that blowout is solely at the feet of the sweetheart deal set between the former Labor state government and the CFMEU. The advice that I have received from the department is that is the reason for that blowout. You didn't hear that yesterday from the former treasurer and the former minister for Transport and Main Roads, when they tried to spin the narrative to suit them. But the truth of the matter is that Queenslanders have been paying the price for Labor's mismanagement. We are committed to stopping the rot. We will address these budget blowouts. Because if we do not, Queenslanders are not going to be able to get the roads, the rail and the infrastructure that we need so desperately here in Queensland.

So we're committed to being open with Queenslanders. We're committed to addressing the drivers that are causing these budget blowouts under Labor. And I'll be coming back to the Queensland people once I have a more fulsome picture of the blowouts as they relate to Cross River Rail. But what's very clear is that under Labor, the mismanagement and the sweetheart deals that have resulted have meant that Queenslanders have got less. We've spent more on projects that should have been managed efficiently. Labor's own numbers show that Cross River Rail has blown out by \$2.4 billion and it's two years behind, behind when it should have been delivered. That's Labor's promises. They've released that information. What's clear is the situation is far worse, and we'll be, we'll be making that information known to every Queenslanders. But it needs to stop, and if it doesn't stop Queenslanders are not going to get the infrastructure that they need so desperately.

The question needs to be asked of the former transport minister and the former treasurer and deputy premier, why they chose to hide this information when they released their leaks

yesterday. Why did they not release this information when they knew through the entirety of the election campaign that these, these amounts, had been signed off? They had been signed off by those ministers, and they chose to hide that from Queenslanders. It is simply not good enough, and that that demonstrates everything that Queenslanders need to know about the former state Labor government. I'm happy to take any questions as it relates to those issues, and then I'll hand over to the Deputy Premier.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] how it's the CFMEU and [inaudible] that's blowing out [inaudible]?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Yeah, look, the advice I have received is that the costs associated with imposing the BPIC principles on the Cross River, on the Gold Coast Light Rail stage three A are the biggest driver on that blow out of \$330 million. To be clear, that was a decision of the former Labor government. That was a decision... I mean, ultimately, it's very clear that the former Labor government were installed by the CFMEU, owned by the CFMEU, and as a consequence, Queenslanders have paid the price. And if we use that exam... that project as the example, \$330 million as a direct consequence of a government decision to cave into the CFMEU and to give a militant union like the CFMEU everything that they want, it's Queenslanders that paid the price, and it needs to stop.

REPORTER:

What's actually causing the increase, though? Like, when you're saying a sweetheart deal is it like, what is it, wages? The cost of these projects, why is it increasing so much?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Yeah, look, Rachel, it's... there's a number of factors as to what's driving that increase. Part of it is a decrease in productivity. We're seeing increased industrial action on sites as a consequence of the fact that the balance has shifted to basically allowing the CFMEU unfettered access, and unfettered rain on many of these sites. It's also about the fact that, the simple fact of the matter is that it's more difficult for subcontractors to get on site for example. If we look at some of the sites here in Brisbane with respect to Cross River Rail, they've been in prod... protected industrial action for many, many days, and that is what is resulting in significant delays to the projects. We look at Gold Coast Light Rail, the BPIC impact on Gold Coast Light Rail has been considerable. And that is the direct, the direct consequences of \$330 million blowout which was signed off by Labor in September.

REPORTER:

What happens now? What happens now to these projects? Do you pay their money? Do you renegotiate? Do you cancel BPICs?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Tim, the Premier's been very clear, we need to deliver these projects. They are important projects for Queenslanders to make sure that they get home sooner from a long day at work.

But the reality is, we need to stop the rot. We need to stop these sweetheart deals. These, these arrangements....

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

... these arrangements have been signed off by the former Labor government. So these are contracts that are in place right now. What we need to ensure is that management of major projects in Queensland is done in a way that puts Queensland taxpayers first. And for far too long, it has been the CFMEU that has been put first, and Queenslanders second. And what is very, very clear, as I continue to get briefings from the department, and as I continue to analyse all of the different projects because, to be clear, we're talking about two projects today, but the same is true for road projects and rail projects right across the state. Costs have blown out under Labor because of mismanagement, and we need to address the core drivers of that. I'm...

REPORTER:

When you say that contracts have been signed, you're saying that potentially Queensland taxpayers are going to pay for it?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

The Labor Party has committed to Queensland taxpayers paying \$330 million more for Gold Coast Light Rail. That is a decision of the former Labor government made in September and hidden from Queenslanders through an election campaign because it was an inconvenient truth.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] of future contracts, will you not enter into those with the CFMEU? How do you prevent this from then happening in the future?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Well, Rachel, what's very clear is that we need to ensure that the relationship between the state government and contractors and unions is one of collaboration to ensure that we are getting the best outcomes for Queensland taxpayers. It's all been one way to this point. And to be clear, it's all been one way because of the CFMEU and the fact that the former Labor state government were owned by the CFMEU. They would not stand up to the CFMEU. Steven Miles has admitted that he was more than happy to take direction from the CFMEU when he was the premier. In fact, many of you have observed that Steven Miles was installed as a consequence of the CFMEU and their support. So I think what we need to see is a resetting of the relationship. A recognition that we need to put productivity front and centre of all government decisions. Now that's true in every single government department. It's true when we talk about major projects, but what we need to ensure is that when a project is announced, that it is delivered on time and on budget. And the Premier has made it very clear in my charter letter that it is my obligation to ensure that projects are delivered on time and

on budget. The first step of that is going through the existing pipeline of works to establish where projects are at now. And we'll be very open with Queenslanders to ensure that they have all of the facts as it relates to the current state of affairs. But the Premier has been crystal clear in my conversations with him that my job is to ensure that those projects are delivered on time and on budget. And I think that's what's been missing from the former state government. There was no accountabilities for ministers who failed to deliver projects on time and on budget, and there should be. Hayden?

REPORTER:

When you're talking about stopping the rot, is that tinkering with BPIC? Is it abolishing BPIC? Is that tinkering with industrial relations laws? How will you actually remove that sweetheart deal that you're talking about?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Well, the first step is to recognise that Queenslanders, Queensland taxpayer dollars, need to be held front and centre in these conversations. We need to ensure that we're getting value for money for every Queensland taxpayer, that productivity is at the forefront of every single government decision. There are a number of different drivers behind many of these blowouts, but what is very clear from the briefings I've received to date is that the relationship between the former Labor state government and the CFMEU are a big reason for these projects blowing out, not just in a financial sense, but also with respect to the time to deliver these projects. So we need, we need to more fulsomely understand all of the drivers. I think if, if Queenslanders...

REPORTER:

[inaudible] legislation? How are you going to improve [inaudible]?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Well, we'll consider any measure that that delivers more infrastructure on time and on budget for Queenslanders. But I'm not going to go off half-cocked at this point in time and suggest that I have the solutions to that those issues after a week in the job. What's very clear is that Queenslanders have been lied to by the former Labor state government. That this information has been hidden. It shouldn't be. We will be open and transparent with Queenslanders, even when it's inconvenient, even when there is information that might be a challenge for the state government, Queenslanders deserve to know that information. These sorts of, these sorts of significant project blowouts should have been released to Queenslanders before the state election. They were deliberately hidden. But to answer your question, Hayden, I'm, I'm confident that the state government can address the drivers that are causing these blowouts, and it starts with accountability. It starts with accountability from the top. I, as the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, should be held to account for projects being delivered on time and on budget. And that was missing from the entirety of the term of the former Labor state government.

REPORTER:

They were saying that this amount had been released. When did you [inaudible] signed off on? This September just gone?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Correct.

REPORTER:

They're saying they released in an annual report, \$494 million was released in their 22-23 annual report in the Transport and Main Roads. Is that something different to what you're talking about?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Well, I'm not sure what Labor's referring to, Tim, but the information I have been briefed is this decision was made in September. This \$494 million is an additional blowout, in addition to the \$170 million, which the former treasurer and the former minister for Transport and Main Roads chose to leak yesterday. Labor are probably best placed to answer the questions with respect to their actions in government. What's very clear is they have hidden this information from Queenslanders.

DEPUTY PREMIER:

Good morning. Okay, thank you, Minister Mickelberg. How enlightening is that to have transparency and a Minister releasing figures that we didn't see under the former Labor government. And I've got to say, in 16 years in public life, it's extraordinary what I saw yesterday where the Opposition, having just lost an election, are coming forward and offering the people of Queensland the itemised Labor budget blowouts that they...apparently last week, Steven Miles said they didn't have, and they didn't know about blowouts. And yet, yesterday, they came forward with Shadow Minister Mellish and Shadow Deputy Leader Cameron Dick offering their Labor blowouts that they did know. So what they have absolutely proved is they do have a list of Labor blowouts. They have a list of Labor blowouts in government, and I'm calling on the Opposition today to release the full list, because Grace Grace said she didn't know about the Olympic and Paralympic blowouts. Steven Miles said last week he didn't know about any of the blowouts. But someone obviously did in the Labor Party. So there is a list. They know the Labor blowouts, and I'm calling on them today – Steven Miles, Cameron, Dick, Grace Grace – to release the full list, because guess what? If they don't, we will. And I'm going to do it today.

I've talked about the CFMEU for years. I've talked about the CFMEU bullying, fear and intimidation on construction sites. I have gone into Parliament and put forward the concerns raised by Workplace Health and Safety Inspectors for 10 years. I've gone into Budget Estimates, and I've asked Grace Grace directly, as the minister, why she is not offering support to Workplace Health and Safety inspectors on the ground who are constantly bullied and intimidated by the CFMEU on construction sites in Queensland. And Grace Grace, Steven Miles and Cameron Dick always said "nothing to see here." Well, there was.

And today I want to talk about a secret report that I have been trying to get for the last couple of years through RTI that was rejected. I asked Grace Grace about it at Budget Estimates, and

she refused to disclose the information. Well, it's amazing how quick things can be reported in government. Here's the secret report that Grace Grace did not want people to know about. This was essentially an internal survey of Workplace Health and Safety inspectors across Queensland where they were asked particular questions about their experience on construction sites in Queensland. And I want to read two paragraphs from this report, and I've got to say, in the spirit of openness transparency, I will seek to table this at the first available opportunity in Parliament. But I want to read two paragraphs from the report. And it talks about in one element, stakeholder access. Now this is stakeholder access to construction sites in Queensland. Do I need to define what a stakeholder is? CFMEU? Okay, so when I say stakeholder, I'm talking about the CFMEU:

[EXCERPT]

Stakeholder Access: Interviewees reported concerns about external stakeholders having a direct line to access into Office of Industrial Relations. Allegations of external stakeholders reporting their dissatisfaction with OIR inspectors and demanding replacement inspectors onsite were common across the interviewees. Some inspectors mentioned issues, such as pressure to write specific types of infringement notices and issues penalties to PCBU's while onsite. Example: Seemingly minor infringement notices related to missing documentation and absent resources or materials in worker amenities, which was interpreted as undue influence. Inspectors reported working in fear of complaints being made against them if they failed to comply with external stakeholder requests onsite.

Occupational violence and aggression and low job support: Aggression, intimidation and some reports of physical and verbal violence from external stakeholders towards staff were commonly reported. Some inspectors reported significant trauma and anxiety symptoms of having been exposed to multiple instances of workplace occupational violence and aggression. Example: Becoming physically sick before attending union jobs, taking sick leave, being diagnosed with mental health disorders.

[END OF EXCERPT]

DEPUTY PREMIER:

One of the conclusions from this report, and I quote:

[EXCERPT]

The outcomes reportedly experienced by Workplace Health and Safety inspectors, are significant. Multiple inspectors and ex-inspectors reported feeling intense work-related stress and a strong desire that cultural change needs to occur.

[END OF EXCERPT]

DEPUTY PREMIER:

My message to Workplace Health and Safety inspectors and our hardworking public servants in the Office of Industrial Relations is this today: cultural change will happen. And I hope that I've shown in the last week, particularly, the new government will address the cultural change. We will back our public servants over the CFMEU. We will back our Workplace Health and Safety independent Inspectorate over the CFMEU. The culture will change. That

is my commitment to our hardworking public servants and our Workplace Health and Safety Inspectorate culture will change.

I have dismissed CFMEU representatives on boards. I have put in a triaging system already in the last week that all matters of Workplace Health and Safety go to a 1300 number. Special access to the CFMEU is 'goneski.' Everyone will abide by the same rules with Office of Industrial Relations. So in conclusion, can I thank our hardworking Workplace Health and Safety Inspectorate. I have been fighting for you for 10 years to get this cultural change. Grace Grace is the new Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations. She's got to explain why she didn't release the details of this report, because it goes to the very heart and culture of the dodgy relationship between the CFMEU and the Labor Party in Queensland.

REPORTER:

Just on the Olympic Games, have you asked the Federal Government to repurpose the Brisbane Arena funding to other areas?

DEPUTY PREMIER:

No, I haven't.

REPORTER:

What financial penalties does the state face if we pull out of that deal?

PREMIER:

The Treasurer is seeking a briefing, and we said before the election that we would make sure there was transparency with the agreement, and that's what we will deliver.

REPORTER:

Has the government sought any legal advice about whether it can pull out of the deal?

PREMIER:

No, no. The Treasurer is just getting the briefing now.

REPORTER:

Are you willing to pull out of that investment?

PREMIER:

The Treasurer is getting a briefing, and I think it would be premature for me to even speculate on that. Wherever I can, I want to point to you what I said before an election and how it reflects with after the election. So before the election, during the course of Estimates, as well as publicly, we asked questions about how the deal was struck, the relationship that was had to get that, and we'll ask the same questions after. That doesn't predetermine one way or another. It's just being good and transparent and fulfilling what we said we'd do.

REPORTER:

There's obviously questions around how [inaudible]. What do you think about after the supercomputer? Do you think Brisbane needs a supercomputer?

PREMIER:

Let's have a look. Let's have a look at the deal. Let's have a look. And my commitment to all of you is that you will see in full transparency about that deal, about that arrangement. And I think that's what people expect of us, and that's what they'll get.

REPORTER:

When you have a final investment decision?

PREMIER:

It is early days. He's only just sought that, so I can perhaps refer you to David on that.

REPORTER:

Premier, what particularly worries you on that? Is it the competitive [inaudible] more broadly, or is it the influences of some of the lobbyists involved?

PREMIER:

We would just like answers to the questions that we asked nearly a year ago. And again, Queenslanders could have been furnished with all of this. We asked what I thought were mature and relevant questions. And David is now following through on that, and we will release them to you.

REPORTER:

Olympic stadiums and the cost blowouts you've seen the deputy announce in the last few days. Are you confident the changes you'll make to the arrangements that you're going to stop these blow outs? Will you still be able to deliver decent staging [inaudible] \$7.1 billion or are we going to face another cut price games?

PREMIER:

No, I am confident Tim, very confident. And to go back to my earlier comment, the only risk to the delivery of world class games and the only risk to delivery of infrastructure for a growing state would have been more of the same under the former government. Would have been more of the blowouts, more of the cover ups, more of the CFMEU intimidation. And we've called time on that. And that gives Queenslanders confidence that we can deliver infrastructure on time and on budget. And delivery of those of infrastructure for the Olympic and Paralympic Games is really important, as is all of those other things we've spoken about. And I'm very, very confident that that funding window will be delivered, and I'm even more confident that we will deliver the generational infrastructure we said that we would for the election.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] it's not just the CFMEU. It's also the price of building materials. It's all those [inaudible]

PREMIER:

Tim, I have to...I have to sort of go back to something that Brent's just raised. So, in the case of the light rail that Brent's talking about that doesn't relate to building materials that was already factored in. So, I hope that gives Queenslanders the visibility that you as a state have been denied with of course...

REPORTER:

[inaudible] price of building materials [inaudible]

PREMIER:

Of course.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] across the country, not just here in Queensland, so are you going to be taking a very different approach to signing contracts, how will you stop those blowouts?

PREMIER:

We'll be taking a very different approach. And that is contracts will be honoured. And again, I come back to what I said before the election. The greatest impediment to the delivery of infrastructure in Queensland is productivity, and you have a militant union that's built its whole business model on how it can find a way to drive down productivity on job sites, and as a result, it's then feathered its nest by doing so. And what, what's been very frustrating for me is that we've witnessed contracts that have been signed and, and willing parties have gone into that, and there's a whole heap of things in a contract that people willingly do, but then the CFMEU have deliberately made their business model to be how can they be disruptors? How can they ensure that Queensland has more lost days than everywhere else? How can they drive down productivity on those job sites? So all of a sudden, a contract that was entered into blows out massively in time and therefore in cost. And then you have two parties who, who are, who are arm wrestling to finish the job, and that's what we're seeing. We're seeing contracts that have been had to be topped up to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars because they haven't been delivered on time and on budget. So it's a massive impediment that the whole business model of the CFMEU is broken because it puts at the heart of that cozy relationship with the Labor Party, the interests of themselves over the interest of five and a half million Queenslanders who want to be able to afford their rent, get home to their kids and pay lower taxes.

REPORTER:

Is quantum computing something the government should be investing in?

PREMIER:

We'll have a look at the deal. I, I...

REPORTER:

Well, just generally speaking...

PREMIER:

Well generally speaking, I want to have a look at the deal. And I want to be transparent with you and we will. We will.

REPORTER:

Do you think there's merit to that project?

PREMIER:

There's merit in being transparent, yes.

REPORTER:

Could there be cuts to other government programs including investments like [inaudible] just as an example to [inaudible]?

PREMIER:

No...no, Harry, I'm not, I'm not talking about that deal because I haven't seen it, right? So, and David will look through that. But if I can make a more broad comment, I'm going to come back to my first point. We are going to deliver the infrastructure we said we were going to deliver, and that's in the pipeline. And the only risk to that would have been more of the same under the former government. I can't be more clear than that, we have to build hospitals if we are going to deal with the Queensland health crisis, we have to build roads if we are going to have any chance of getting Queenslanders home safely in the regions and on time in the capital. We have to, we have to build generational projects, road, rail, health, education, we must, and that's why I'm calling time on the culture where one militant union has destroyed the ability for taxpayers to be able to afford their infrastructure. That is going to change, and that's my commitment to Queenslanders and I see the opposition shopping around little bits of information, trying to run a scare campaign. It didn't work before the election, and it's certainly not going to work after. We're delivering the infrastructure a growing state needs, and we're going to do it in a calm and methodical way. And the days of the CFMEU running a government will be over. We don't owe our existence to the CFMEU, the Labor Party do.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] on the funding envelope [inaudible] \$7.1 billion?

PREMIER:

Yes.

REPORTER:

The Deputy is talking to Catherine King [inaudible] agreement seeking [inaudible] doesn't that show that you're not confident?

PREMIER:

No, it shows we're going to work well together.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

PREMIER:

Well, well, have you, have you ever seen a state government that doesn't want more money from Canberra? Of course, we want our fair share. And by the way, I'll also be raising with the Prime Minister the 80-20 funding for the Bruce Highway, and the 50-50 health funding. I'm always going to go and fight for more from Canberra, always, but we have a responsibility to do things on time and on budget, and I'm very confident we will.

REPORTER:

So does that indicate though you're wanting the Commonwealth to pay more for the Olympic Games than Queensland currently is?

PREMIER:

We'll always go and fight for more from the Commonwealth. We always will. And I think, and just on the deputy, the deputy spoken to the minister and given her full visibility about how we want to conduct the review and how we want that independent coordination authority to operate. And I'm very confident that Canberra will see good value in their contribution to that.

REPORTER:

Why are you asking for more cash from Canberra?

PREMIER:

Well, we will always, we will always get the best deal. We will always get the best deal for Queensland taxpayers. But I think you'll find in the in the correspondence to the minister, we're not talking about, not talking about Canberra paying more of their share on the Games, but we are going to be working well with Canberra, and we are going to be extracting more money from them, I can assure you. But read the correspondence, and I think you'll find that's not the case.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] can I confirm that pill testing will go ahead at Schoolies this year?

PREMIER:

Yes.

REPORTER:

Is it definitely not going ahead next year?

PREMIER:

No, no...we've, we've said we, we said we won't be supporting that into the future, but Tim's taken advice about where those contracts are at, and as I said to you, we'll be mature and we'll

be calm and Tim took that advice, and those, those contracts had been executed. Work was underway, but no, we won't be in the future.

REPORTER:

What evidence do you have to support that pill testing increases drug taking?

PREMIER:

The evidence that we want to send a message to young people that there is no safe amount of drugs that they can use, and you can't set different rules at different times. You can't say that drugs are bad here, but they're good here. It doesn't work like that. And we want to send a message to young people that drugs shouldn't be part of their lives and I want them to know that they don't, they don't need drugs in their lives to have fun.

REPORTER:

Will you be repealing the drug diversion laws as well for those small personal quantities of drugs?

PREMIER:

We've spoke, we spoke about that before the election, and the answer is yes.

REPORTER:

Will you implement the stadium recommendation [inaudible] comes up with?

PREMIER:

Well, you asked that, you asked that yesterday or the day before, and the answer is the same, that we're going to put in place a board that has great pedigree in delivering infrastructure, that has a great ability to be able to map out a vision free from all of the interference that we've seen. And we would expect that their recommendations will be world class.

REPORTER:

I ask because sometimes you're saying that the review committee's recommendation will be sacrosanct, but you're also saying that you're not necessarily going to commit [inaudible]

PREMIER:

Well, they will be sacrosanct. They'll be treated with the respect they deserve. Ultimately, people elect members of parliament, and we're accountable to Queenslanders that that's, that's the way it should be. But I think you'll, you'll see the quality of people who will be on there. I've got every faith that those recommendations will create the generational infrastructure that Queenslanders were promised 1200 days ago.

REPORTER:

Will the Gabba considered a new stadium?

PREMIER:

Let's, let's have a look at, let's have a look at what comes forward.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

PREMIER:

Well, no, that's for the infrastructure body to look at. That'll be, that'll be for that independent coordination authority. But I come back to what I said, that the Games were bid on a focus of generational infrastructure. That was a contract that Queensland has signed on to. I still remember the conversation. I still remember it. And everybody was talking about road and rail. That's what people were talking about. They were talking about a vision to fix planning across the broader region, tourism. I took it to the next level. I started talking about a 20-year tourism plan. But there was tourism talks from the beginning, accessibility, the Paralympics, building up disaster resilience when it comes to your telecommunication, that's got to be the legacy play out of the Games.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] transport [inaudible] details about what you received at [inaudible] signed off [inaudible] news about what was signed off [inaudible]

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Yeah, Tim, look, I provide you a full breakdown, but I've been advised that it was signed off in September, and it relates to surface works and integration works in relation to Cross River Rail. To be clear, this information hasn't been released to Queenslanders. I'll ask you the question, when has the former Minister for Transport Main Road stood in front of you and articulated this blowout in addition to the blowout that he chose to leak yesterday, the answer is he hasn't, and the reason they haven't is because they're ashamed of these blowouts, and they know and they should be ashamed. The reality is that Labor's mismanagement has meant that Queenslanders are paying more for the infrastructure that we need.

REPORTER:

Minister who signed off on it? When you say the former government signed off was it the department?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Well, given, given the quantum, CBRC, would have had to sign off on it.

REPORTER:

So the annual TMR annual report for 2022-23 says total expenses in 2022-23 increased by \$494 million. That's the expenses for the year ending 30 June 2023. Is there a chance that's the same cost increase we're talking about here?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

To be clear, the cost increases we're talking about here relate to the integration works, the surface works for stabling yards, for Yeerongpilly Junction, and a number of other areas. And that, that's what this blowout relates to. These are decisions that were made by the former government in September.

REPORTER:

Is it possible that it could be [inaudible]

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Well, I'm not going to rule anything in or out because, to be frank, I've been getting brief on these issues for a week. I'm happy to have a look into that report I have read the last year report, I'd have to say that it doesn't align with the information that I've been briefed on, which was, this was a decision made by the former government in September this year.

REPORTER:

You said there was a number of drivers for these cost increases though, so what else [inaudible] department contributing to [inaudible]?

MINISTER MICKELBERG:

Well, you've identified some of them, but what is overwhelmingly clear is that the largest driver, as I said, if we use Gold Coast Light Rail, well, it's very clear that there are input costs which have resulted in increased cost pressures on projects. But I think that the key point to note here is that these are not new issues. Those drivers have been around since at least as we moved out of COVID, and they have been priced into projects. These blowouts that we're talking about now are as a consequence of government decisions and government mismanagement. So there are a number of drivers that have driven up the cost of delivering infrastructure in Queensland and in other jurisdictions as well. But the truth of the matter is that what sets Queensland apart from other jurisdictions is Labor's mismanagement when it comes to these large infrastructure projects. Industrial Relations, relationships between the CFMEU and the former government have driven up the cost of delivery of major transport projects here in Queensland.

[ENDS]

Event: Press conference

Speaker/s: Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry Chair Joshua Creamer

Airdate: 22 November 2024, 1pm

Duration: 18mins

E&OE

MELISSA MACKAY:

We're taking you live now to Brisbane, where the Chairperson of Queensland's Truth-telling and Healing inquiry is speaking.

JOSHUA CREAMER:

... with the Premier the Minister or the Director-General. There's been very little communication, but for a proposed meeting that was indefinitely postponed. Now, I think we've all come to realise over the last 23 days that we are all governed by the rule of law. And if you want to dismantle a functioning and effective inquiry, you have to comply with the law. And as it stands, the *Path to Treaty Act* is the law, and under the *Path of Treaty Act*, myself and other members, we have certain responsibilities, our duties and functions. And given the inability of the government to be able to move swiftly, we've decided to recommence the work of the inquiry.

There will be some limitations to that. The plan going forward is obviously to open our submissions portal and that is open today. Our submissions portal will be opened at least until early January. At this stage, and at the end of that juncture, we're proposing to produce a report. It is obvious that the inquiry will not get the opportunity to run out its statutory term of three years, but nevertheless, it's likely to be now, several months before the government can actually do something about repealing that legislation.

I also have responsibilities under the *Path to Treaty Act* for the efficient and effective use of those resources that the inquiry has. Those resources include our staff, which are provided to support the inquiry by the department. Taking those things into consideration, I think it's important that we utilise our resources effectively over the next coming months and as I say, the staff will be focused on engaging with key organisations, institutions working through the submissions and then producing a report which under the Act has to be provided to the Minister and will be tabled in Parliament. Any questions?

REPORTER:

So what have your requests been to the government? What have you been trying to find out?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Look, I've sent six correspondents and some of those I think you've seen. The latest one was this morning, which is quite comprehensive and has specific details which are confidential in relation to the operations of the inquiry, but effectively requesting an urgent meeting to

understand what their plan is and what their processes are. My concerns have always been the communities in which we've worked with and the trauma informed approach, ensuring that we have are dealing with them effectively, and we've been taking steps over the last number of weeks to engage with Cherbourg and Stradbroke in particular in closing down that engagement. The staff are critical, what happens to them and just their plans, their timeline for closing up this inquiry. As I say, the *Path to Treaty Act* exists and we need to adhere to our functions.

REPORTER:

You say several months to repeal the *Path to Treaty Act*. Could they put a stop to the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry at any point, you know, in that timeframe??

JOSHUA CREAMER:

There's number of things which are relevant. So obviously the *Path to Treaty Act* is the primacy in that. The second part is that the members and myself as chair have our positions. And third, that we have access to the resources of the staff. And so long as those three things are in place, we are an independent inquiry and we have to make decisions for ourselves based on the information which is available to us.

REPORTER:

What have you been doing the last 23 days?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

We've been working on a closeout plan actually. We developed, we hadn't... obviously, we thought in 2027 we'd have to develop our closeout plan, but that has obviously been brought forward. And over the last couple of weeks, we've been working to ensure we comply with our principles around indigenous data sovereignty and consents. We've handed back information to our participants who provided us with evidence. We've been out to, obviously, Cherbourg closing out that process, and myself and a number of members and staff were on Stradbroke this week closing that process. Also working with the State Archivist to ensure that the information, the record of the inquiry and the evidence that's been given is protected. So those are some of the key priorities over the last couple of weeks

REPORTER:

There's a sitting week on the 9th of December, which is a full sitting week. What if they repeal the legislation that week?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

As I understand it, there's a number of steps to repeal the legislation. They could certainly repeal the legislation this week coming. We all know it's the first sitting week of Parliament, so they could do that. They might be able to introduce the bill in December. I don't know whether they'd be able to have that repeal bill come in force before Christmas. I certainly, we certainly can't sit around here for months and months and months and waiting for them to do something. As I say, we've got a responsibility as members under the Act, and I've got

responsibilities in terms of the effective, efficient use of resources. And I don't want the team sitting around doing nothing, waiting for the government for 3 or 4 months.

REPORTER:

So is there still funding available to you to, I guess, open this portal and to have those staff on?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Yeah, no, certainly we've got access to those resources. We've got the staff and we've got access to the resources which have been there. There's been no, as I say, no information from the government. So no discussions about pulling back our resources at any stage. So whilst there will continue to utilise them.

REPORTER:

Do you know how much it costs so far?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Yeah, we published our report in August which was around, just under \$2, around \$2.5 million. I don't have that exactly with me, but I know it was under \$3 million. So those were our costs to date, and we've spent very minimal cost since then. I will say we're not proposing to go into the big truth-telling sessions and hearings. They are very expensive processes. And utilising, you know, our budget responsibly it wouldn't be beneficial to use those resources or expend that type of money in the event that the inquiry has only got a few months to continue.

REPORTER:

The Deputy Premier says today that the Minister, Fiona Simpson, is seeking advice about the questions you've put to her and wants to be armed with that information before meeting, and he has confidence that meeting will take place. Has that been communicated to you? What has been the latest?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

I'm aware they were seeking advice, but there's not been any timeline around proposed meeting. As I say, it's 23 days now. We simply can't wait around for things to happen. We need to continue to meet our obligations under the *Path to Treaty Act*.

REPORTER:

Wouldn't she be able to answer those questions by meeting with you or meeting with participants of the truth-telling inquiry? And wouldn't you want to know those answers before you put a stop to it?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Look, I mean, they can take whatever action they choose. I saw the minister at the Women's Legal Service breakfast yesterday, and she ran away from me. So, you know, if they don't want to have a discussion, that's up to them.

REPORTER:

How would you describe relations with the government?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Frosty.

REPORTER:

She ran away from you?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Well, she certainly didn't, wasn't coming up for a chat. She saw me and went the other way.

REPORTER:

It's such a pretty important thing for the Premier to do first up, you know, announce it the day of swearing in his ministers. Why is it, why are they dragging their heels when it comes to making a decision?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Look, I can't speak to their approach other than to say it certainly was obviously the first decision they made. We were all aware of that when it came out at the press conference. We, I think there's been a level of lack of capability on their behalf, even to be able to have a meeting. So whilst we aren't provided with information and we've got to continue to undertake our work, we can in the timeframe do some really important work engaging with key institutions. Many of you would have seen a number of churches and other organisations have come out in support of the inquiry over the last few weeks. We want to engage with them and make sure that the records or the information that we receive goes onto the public record. And that, that is an important part of the process, that the material that the inquiry will receive over the next coming, coming weeks will form part of our official record and we'll be open to the public.

REPORTER:

Sum up your feelings in a few words right now in terms of the State Government?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Sorry, what was that?

REPORTER:

Can you sum up your feelings at the moment?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Their feelings?

REPORTER:

Yours.

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Sorry, I missed that.

REPORTER:

What your feelings are in relation to how they handled it?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, no. Look, I can only speak to what the community. And as I say, we've been out to Cherbourg, we've been out to Stradbroke Island, and there's a lot of hurt out in the community from the decision that's been made. You know, there's... people feel a responsibility and the importance of this process. And I won't just say that's restricted to the Aboriginal community. We've all seen many different organisations and institutions come out in support of the inquiry over the last couple of weeks, so we feel a responsibility to continue to do the best work we can in the timeframe we've got.

REPORTER:

There's been a petition made, has that more than 8000 signatures that I've seen from the general public. Should the government be listening to the voices in the community that don't want this inquiry to be shut down?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Look, all I can say there's been a wave of support, and it's up to the government whether they choose to listen to that. As you say, there's been a, there's been a lot of things circulating around. I know people are, you know, doing stuff next week as well with the first week of Parliament sitting. So there's a huge wave of support. And, you know, we've got to... it's really ultimately a responsibility for them, whether they listen to it or not.

REPORTER:

What's going to be in that report when you finish it in January next year?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, I haven't started yet.

[laughter]

REPORTER:

I mean, what are we... what sort of topics are you going to be? You don't have to tell me the outcomes yet, but what sort of stuff will you be producing?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Well, it's going to be based on the evidence we receive. That's largely what it will come down to. And look, we've already received a significant body of evidence from government departments. You would have seen with our government truth-telling session, there's a there's material that we can really sink our teeth into over the next couple of weeks, and we expect submissions from other organisations. We have been contacted since closing the portal. We

know there are organisations out there preparing submissions, opening it today, putting the word out there. We know that there will be material that comes before us, but until we review that material, we won't be able to, I can't tell you what it is we'll be determining.

REPORTER:

Do you think there'll be advice for government, though?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Well, our report, our recommendations will be advice. That's how the Act is set up, that our report is to provide advice to the Minister. And those recommendations will be on that basis later.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] the Mayor of Palm Island was mentioned by the new Premier in that statement, in that press conference. I was up there earlier in the week, and I can tell you, homeownership is certainly not the biggest problem facing the community there. And that's like many communities right across Queensland.

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Look, I did see the Mayor Lacey come out and say that truth-telling is important after the Premier's comments and should be continued.

REPORTER:

And just to clarify, you don't think this has ever happened before where, like, an independent inquiry has been closed down by a change of government?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Not for a political purpose, no. We haven't found any reason in Queensland where there has been a, an attempt or a wish or desire to close down an inquiry purely for a political reason.

REPORTER:

In terms of those hearings that were scheduled for Cobourg and for Stradbroke, since they've been cancelled, what has actually happened there? Has there still been an element of truth-telling happening out of those communities?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Yeah, I think Cherbourg is a good example. They've been they were well placed to talk about their history, given it's 20 years since they opened the ration shed, which is a really significant part of their history. They did undertake some work around truth-telling, I think, an event around truth-telling last week. And I know that the... you'll recall that the Premier said we weren't able to attend meetings on Stradbroke Island a couple of weeks ago. I know those meetings did attend and visiting with the community earlier this week, they've got this ongoing commitment to towards truth-telling.

REPORTER:

With the portal reopening, what additional stories are, I guess, you're hoping to hear? And do you think given you know, there is a, I guess shorter timeline now, what fear is it that, you know, what else is going to be lost? What are we not going to get to hear from people?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, we've lost a huge amount. Even just Cherbourg, for example, and I know they've taken steps, they've obviously taken steps towards truth-telling. But we'd prepared 40 witnesses that would spend at least two or three hours each telling their evidence. You know, that's a, I mean, it's a small example, but that's a big body of evidence in one community. And the depth and the detail of that type of history will be lost. And the, and really the opportunity for Queensland to understand its history, you know, will be lost by, you know, by shelving the inquiry.

REPORTER:

How many submissions have you received before it was closed?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

I don't know exactly, but we sent out over 400 notices for submissions and those notices are actually still active. We didn't recall any of those notices. And so we'll, now with the reopening of this portal, our team will engage with those various organisations to ensure that those who can meet the timeline of a submission will do so. But I know there will be probably a more broader approach as well, with engaging key institutions over the next couple of weeks to ensure that there's a lot of organisations who are aware of this process reopening.

REPORTER:

Do you expect government departments to be effusive in their response to give you information that you asked for?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Government, we are sending notices to different government departments and really, it's a matter for the Director-Generals. Under the *Public Service Act*, *Public Service Commission Act*, truth-telling is still a priority and that is the law. And Director-Generals have the responsibility to engage with the truth-telling process. So there's a legal requirement that they do, but ultimately it's a matter for them.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] the other day when you were at that breakfast. She's not answering emails. She's not taking phone calls from anybody really. Is, is Fiona Simson out of her depth in Aboriginal affairs?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, look, I'm not in a position to comment on that. Good question though, Dan.

REPORTER:

In terms of the stories you've heard so far, are there any standouts for you, any stories that just need to be told?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, look, the Queensland... the history of Queensland needs to be told. That's what it comes down to. I've had the benefit of working on historical matters for 15 years. I've got a better grasp than most about the history. It's a beautiful history. It's a powerful history and very few people understand it. That's the, that was the benefit of this inquiry. But we'll do the best we can in the short timeframe we've got to compile a report that covers, you know, key aspects of our history and make some important recommendations.

REPORTER:

What... why not go and find, you've spoken to a lot of times about these very old elders who are on the verge of death, to be frank. Why not go and find those people and, you know, maybe not hold a formal hearing, but talk to them individually just so that information is on the record?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

There's two reasons for that. I think being responsible with the resources we've got, the limits on travel that I'm going to impose on the team, I simply don't want to send big teams out, spending lots of resources where we know it's going to be cut. And they're really critical factor in engaging with members of the community is our trauma or trauma aware and healing informed approaches. And with our witnesses in Brisbane, we've met up to eight times before they gave their ultimate evidence. So we don't simply... engaging with the process we're not confident can complete it, is really in conflict with our trauma aware and healing informed approach. Any other questions, comments? Alright, thank you.

REPORTER:

[inaudible]

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Go for it.

REPORTER:

[inaudible] resilient. You certainly look like the weight of the world was on your shoulders last press conference. How are you feeling just personally and emotionally? And the team.

JOSHUA CREAMER:

Oh, I think the whole team's been really encouraged by the support that's out there in the community. And, and I want to acknowledge all of those institutions that have come out in a very public way, institutions like the, I think there was a dozen different churches that came out in support in a single joint statement. So we're really encouraged by that. And, you know, we feel a responsibility to the community. I think those discussions with Cherbourg and Stradbroke Island, I was effectively going out and apologising for, I felt like I'd let them down, my team let them down, although we didn't. But in a way, you know, that's being

decent and respectful of the process and to the community and the people that have participated.

REPORTER:

Can I just, just to confirm for the timeline, obviously, Fiona Simson agreed to have that meeting with you the day after the press conference. That day, what happened? Did you receive a phone call saying she could no longer meet or what happened there?

JOSHUA CREAMER:

I'll check the correspondence for the day. You can, we can check the date and the chronology. But effectively, there was an email that came through requesting a meeting. We responded that afternoon saying we were available. And I think the following day there was a request to postpone that meeting. And there's been no further attempts to, on their behalf, to organise another meeting. But certainly there's been several from myself after that. Thank you.

MELISSA MACKAY:

That was the Chair of Queensland's Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, Joshua Creamer, announcing that the inquiry will recommence its work reopening submissions from today until January, while Queensland's *Path to Treaty Act* is still in place.