

1989 Cabinet Minutes: Highlights report

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1 November 2019

Fitzgerald Inquiry Report

Bill Gunn, loyal deputy to all three National Party premiers, first announced the Fitzgerald Inquiry into 'crime bosses' and police corruption to demonstrate his leadership potential ('After The Coup', *Sunday Mail*, 24/9/1989; 'Beware The Victory Salute', *Courier Mail*, 25/9/1989; Wanna, p486 & 581). Initially expected to run for six weeks, the Inquiry eventually held sittings for more than 200 days, heard evidence from over 300 witnesses and cost \$20m. The Inquiry's extension, which revealed far more than the few illegal casinos, odd "bent copper" and secret brothels that Gunn probably anticipated, meant that numerous 'Secret' Decisions were necessary (Decisions 56195, 56287, 56289, 56342, 56394, 56492, 57019, 57021).

Implementation of the Fitzgerald Report recommendations 'lock, stock and barrel' was approved by Cabinet on 3 July (Decision 57021; Wanna p609). Parliament was recalled on 5 July to discuss the Fitzgerald Inquiry report (Decision 56845). Ahern told the House: 'Today in Queensland and throughout Australia every eye was on this Parliament to debate the Fitzgerald commission report' (*Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, 5/7/1989, p5431). Two important pieces of legislation, recommended by Fitzgerald, eventually emerged from the Inquiry: the Electoral and Administrative Reform Commission (EARC) Bill and the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) Bill (Decisions 57182, 57227, 57448, 57580; 57594). These institutions were different to anything ever seen in Queensland politics. A new Police Act was also drafted and approved (Decisions 56473, 57117, 57185, 57305, 57637).

A number of politicians and other high-ranking officials were adversely named at the Fitzgerald Inquiry (Fitzgerald Report). The resignation of Don Lane, the Member for Merthyr (a former police officer), led to Cabinet noting the 'cost' of the necessary byelection in May and also (in June) discussing the possibility of 'significant adverse publicity' connected with Supreme Court proceedings after the poll (Decisions 56692, 56879). Lane and Leisha Harvey were both found guilty of 'falsifying expense claims' and imprisoned. Brian Austin and Geoff Muntz, who also resigned in 1989, were subsequently convicted of official corruption.

On 17 July Cabinet discussed the impending State election, due to be held before 8 January 1990. Two choices were mooted to extend the Parliamentary term to 8 July 1990: either to hold 'a Referendum on existing boundaries' (planned for 14 October) or to delay the election until 'six months after the EARC review' into electoral boundaries (Decision 57179, Wanna p627). Queensland's notorious "gerrymander" was exposed. In August, amendments to the Referendums Act were considered (Decision 57298). However, the cancellation of the proposed Referendum was approved by Cabinet on 4 September (Decision 57394). Ahern publicly announced that the State Budget, presented on 7 September, was deliberately intended to keep the National Party in favour with Queensland voters ('Now For The State Election', *Courier Mail*, 8/9/1989).



Ministerial office expenses were discussed at many Cabinet meetings. In February Ministers agreed to not make any public statements on expenses (Decision 56019). Submissions on members' interests were considered in February and March before a Decision was approved in April (Decisions 56166, 56176, 56234, 56345). In September Ministers discussed a submission on the 'Guidelines for the Financial Management of the Office of the Minister' (Decision 57446). Further submissions on the matter were considered at subsequent meetings and eventually deferred 'to a later date' (Decisions 57517, 57576, 57674, 57694). On 13 November the Guidelines were approved in a Decision marked 'Secret' (Decision 57958). Cabinet decided, at the final meeting before the election, to approve a further Submission on expenses: 'Expenditure by Ministers at Expo 88 relating to such representation by Ministers was correctly categorised as Ministerial Expenses' (Decision 58085; 'Cabinet Moved on Election Eve to Validate Expo Spending', *Courier Mail*, 6/12/1989).

On 25 September, the creation of the Department of the Attorney-General was approved at the last Cabinet meeting chaired by Ahern (Decision 57524). Fitzgerald noted that the amalgamation of the Departments of the Attorney-General and the Minister of Justice had 'led to a greater risk of partiality in the exercise of the Attorney-General's powers', limiting the Government's access to unbiased and critical legal advice (Fitzgerald Report, p138, p359). He recommended the 're-establishment of the independent role of the office of Attorney-General' (Fitzgerald Report, p371).

Premier Ahern's replacement by Russell Cooper

Russell Cooper was elected leader of the National Party at a party meeting held immediately after the Cabinet meeting on 25 September. One of the first changes made when Cooper replaced Ahern as Premier was the 'disbanding' of the Cabinet Budget Committee (Decisions 57808 & 57847; 'Cabinet Axes Budget Committee', *Courier Mail*, 26/9/1989). On 9 October Cabinet members, who had been provided with information on the role of the Attorney-General's Department, restricted their response to 'noting' the comments and endorsing 'the desirability of drafting a set of procedures' to 'facilitate' the 'independent role of the Attorney-General' (Decision 57610).

Tensions between Ministers as a result of Ahern's replacement by Cooper were visible in the Cabinet Minutes. In October, Minister Harper, speaking with regard to a proposed Aboriginal diversionary facility for the Corrective Services Commission, stated that 'the change of Ministers in the Department of Community Services and Ethnic Affairs has resulted in differing viewpoints emerging'. He added: 'The point I wish to make is that I intend to make the recommendation to the Governor in Council as soon as possible after this Submission is absorbed by Cabinet. The purpose of this Submission is to bring to Cabinet's attention that there are differing viewpoints between Ministers' (Decision 57546).

Problems in the machinery of Government in general were also reported in the Minutes. Minister Henderson complained about the finance sector working party in October, recommending that the committee be terminated because it had only met once since establishment in April: 'It is now abundantly clear that the difficult, far-reaching and multifaceted task given to the Working Party by Cabinet has not been performed. Indeed the lack of any significant progress in addressing these matters by the Working Party has resulted in certain deleterious developments in the institutional sector which need to be brought to Cabinet's attention' (Decision 57762).

Senior public servants normally prepared for the possibility of a change of government, but, according to Scott et al, 'the govt instructed that there should be no contact with the Opposition before the election' (Scott et al, p170). Decisions approved at the last National Party Cabinet meetings suggest that Ministers believed they would be returned to power ('Premier Discounts Opinion Poll', *Courier Mail*, 4/11/1989). Extra funds in the 1990 Budget were approved in September; minor tax increases to be introduced in the first Parliamentary session of 1990 were approved in October; on 27 November Cabinet members approved 'additional funding for consultancies to be considered further following the Treasury review of the Budget in early 1990' (Decisions 57402, 57679, 57680, 57681, 58075). In October

Cabinet approved a new \$52 annual rail ticket offering unlimited travel by Brisbane high school students that would commence in Semester 2 1990 (Decision 57749).

Daylight saving trial

In August Cabinet approved a 'test' of Daylight Saving from 29 October 1989 to 4 March 1990 (Decisions 57300, 57349). The potential impact on schools was noted and trading hours for licensed clubs were amended during the trial period (Decisions 57523, 57723). In October Ministers considered the 'Daylight Saving Test Task Force Report', with Minister Lester noting 'Clearly the majority of people in the South-East area of the State as well as certain sections of the community along the coast are in favour of daylight saving' (Decision 57780). He said the problems raised 'predominantly by the rural sector' were school transport, television viewing times ('Television Programs are controlled by networking from Sydney and Melbourne'), skin cancer, 'Queensland's hot climate', problems in dairying, shearing, crop harvesting, bowling and golf clubs trading hours. He also reported on this subject at the last National Party Cabinet meeting held on 27 November, saying 'there is strong opposition to Daylight Saving in the Western areas' (Decision 58057).

With the election approaching, the National Party belatedly remembered promises from the previous Poll, held in 1986, approving a special sports scholarship on 16 October and a special sport coaches scholarship on 23 October (Decisions 57670, 57757). However, despite the best efforts of the conservatives, the electors of Queensland overwhelmingly turned to the Labor Party and Goss. There is no sign in the Cabinet Minutes that this result was ever considered possible by the members of the National Party.

After the state election

The Labor Party government held two Cabinet meetings in 1989. The first, held on 11 December, considered two Submissions: the Queensland Cabinet Handbook and Financial Guidelines. The Handbook provided guidelines for the conducting of Government business. Cabinet meetings were 'only to consider matters of major significance to the business of government', specifically major or politically sensitive policy issues; matters affecting inter-government relations; proposals for new and amending legislation; significant appointments; major revenue proposals; and expenditure contracts over \$100,000 (Decision 1). Goss declared 'the handbook would ensure Cabinet meetings were business-like, high quality meetings and not three-ring circuses of shouting and yelling' ('Daylight Saving In The Bush May End', *Sunday Mail*, 10/12/1989).

Ministers were informed that Submissions would only be accepted after proper consultation, with full advice of all implications, that complied with 'the easy to understand format set out in the Handbook'. In future there would be no oral submissions without the Premier's approval; no public announcements before the Cabinet had made a decision, and collective responsibility for all Decisions. Goss also informed the Cabinet that 'Ministers must not request the Cabinet documents of the past government. Summaries of these documents can be made, but at the discretion of the Department's Chief Executive'. There was a new purpose and procedure for Cabinet. The second Goss-led Cabinet meeting, held on 18 December, mostly considered more mundane matters including housing, education (including the appointment of 200 extra teachers and the approval of 1500 additional higher education places), and public transport (Decisions 6, 8, 10, 11, 12). However, a number of administrative and judicial matters were also discussed. With regards to the Cabinet Handbook, Goss noted that 'some Public Service apathy to change can be expected' (Decision 3).

The Cabinet also approved a new policy on defamation cases, agreeing that 'in future, the Queensland Government will not meet the costs associated with the institution of defamation proceedings by any Minister of the Crown or Member of the Legislative Assembly' (Decision 20). They noted that 'since 1986 in excess of \$350,000 has been paid

to solicitors as a result of such actions' ('Joh to Pursue Law Suits Against ALP Members, *Courier Mail*, 15/2/1989; 'Joh Drops Moore, Warburton Writs', *Courier Mail*, 27/4/1989; 'Govt Will Pay Burns \$68,000 - Court', *Courier Mail*, 7/6/1989). Only one oral submission was discussed by the Goss Cabinet, approving the establishment of the Machinery of Government Committee on 18 December (Decision 25).

Infrastructure

Cape York Spaceport

Reports on the proposed Spaceport, to be located at Temple Bay, were discussed by Cabinet in February and March (Decisions 56050, 56300; 'State Office to Push Qld Spaceport Plans', *Courier Mail*, 14/2/1989). In June Cabinet decided that no statements would be issued about the project 'in view of the sensitive nature of the report' (Decision 56895; 'Spaceport by 1992: Agency', *Courier Mail*, 14/6/1989). A Soviet ZENIT rocket was recommended as the launch vehicle. Cabinet 'reaffirmed support' for the Spaceport in November, endorsing 'Cape York Space Agency's (CYSA Ltd) proposal for the establishment of a commercial spaceport not requiring significant Government financial support' (Decision 57889).

Kangaroo Point and South Bank

Stage 5 of the Cultural Centre, a drama theatre, was approved in January, and the South Bank Corporation Bill was approved in April (Decisions 55825, 57121; 56488). Establishment of the South Bank Corporation was approved in August, with Cabinet noting that financial arrangements for a \$180m loan would be necessary (Decisions 57295, 57397). The possible inclusion of a casino was discussed in October when Cabinet approved the establishment of the South Bank Corp Convention and Exhibition Centre 'in principle' (Decisions 57761, 57888, 'Taxpayers to Foot Bill for \$200m Convention Centre', *Courier Mail*, 7/11/1989).

In January Cabinet approved a development proposal for the Old Naval Stores at Kangaroo Point (Decision 55854). In November rezoning of the Old Naval Stores from Open Space Zone to 'Particular Development Zone' was approved, and Minister Gunn said 'the proposed development will complement activities currently being planned for the Expo Site and will provide a useful public focus for high quality recreation in this area prior to the completion of similar activities on the Expo Site' (Decision 57844). Redevelopment of the former Cairncross Dock, also at Kangaroo Point, was approved in April (Decision 56482; 'Go-Ahead for Big Hotel, Marina In \$150 Million Dockyard Plan', *Courier Mail*, 11/4/1989).

Route 20

Cabinet considered a report on Route 20, through Brisbane's northwest suburbs, in August, noting 'upgrading ... would provide improved travel conditions compared with the do-nothing 'basecase', although congestion in Year 2006 is likely to be slightly worse than at present' and 'additional traffic would be attracted to the route' (Decisions 57297, 57358; 'Route 20 Options Paper Released', *Courier Mail*, 3/5/1989). In September Ministers decided to abandon 'the concept of the Western Arterial Road and designation of Route 20 (Toowong - Everton Park) as a sub-arterial road' (Dec 57509; 'State Approves Option 5 Route', *Courier Mail*, 5/10/1989).

Tertiary education

Higher education was discussed at twenty Cabinet meetings in 1989. Purchase and rezoning of land at Sippy Downs on the Sunshine Coast for a new university was approved in April (Decisions 55902, 56489, 56510, 57983). The conversion of institutions of Advanced Education at Rockhampton and Toowoomba into university colleges, and their eventual renaming as Central Queensland University and the University of Southern Queensland, was approved in June and July (Decisions 56871, 57035; 'Queensland Backdown in Tertiary Rejig', *Courier Mail*, 7/6/1989). Three

campuses (Kelvin Grove, Kedron Park and Carseldine) of the Brisbane College of Advanced Education were approved as 'a separate entity' in June (Decision 56824).

The relocation of the College of Music to South Bank was approved in June, despite the misgivings of students and staff (Decision 56825; 'Merger Plans Upset Students, Lecturers', *Courier Mail*, 8/6/1989). Brian Littleproud, the Minister for Education, Youth and Sport, told Cabinet members that he recommended the Conservatorium be affiliated with the University of Queensland as the University of Queensland already has a Music School and 'it may be easier for the University of Queensland than Griffith University to divest itself of the Conservatorium should a change in Government occur in Canberra and thus allow the State to re-establish the Queensland College of Music as a stand alone institution' (Decision 56825).

In May Cabinet considered a Submission on a report into the restructuring of higher education which recommended that Mt Gravatt College of Advanced Education become part of Griffith University (Decision 56786). In June the Brisbane College of Advanced Education was directed to 'cede its Mt Gravatt campus to Griffith University' (Decision 56824). Legislation to amalgamate Mt Gravatt College of Advanced Education with Griffith University was approved in July, with the Amalgamation Bill approved in September (Decisions 57108, 57391). Cabinet members discussed the future of the Gold Coast College of Advanced Education in May, expected 'form an association' with the University of Queensland, although a possible amalgamation with Griffith University instead was mooted (Decision 56870). Minister Littleproud said: 'It is however explicitly pointed out that there is likely to be a great deal of unfavourable reaction if an amalgamation with Griffith were to be insisted upon'.

Toxic waste site

Submissions on dangerous, hazardous, radioactive and toxic waste were considered at more than twenty meetings in 1989. Reports from a Task Force dealing with a hazardous waste site at Kingston, eventually made public, were discussed between January and August (Decisions 55994, 56015, 56068, 56108, 56109, 56147, 56170, 56294, 57258). A hazardous waste dump at Willowbank was approved 'in principle' by Cabinet in April (Decision 56558; 'Shire to Fight Waste Dump Plans', *Courier Mail*, 26/4/1989). However, the Cabinet decided in July to 'not conduct any further investigations into hazardous waste storage in Moreton Shire', preferring to 'examine potential sites more removed from the Brisbane-West Moreton region' (Decision 57091). Minister Gibbs informed Cabinet members in August that, if negotiations about a proposed Southern Queensland Waste Authority proved unsuccessful, the Brisbane City Council would be forced 'to accept wastes from other local authority areas at least until the end of the current calendar year' (Decision 57343). In October the transfer of radioactive waste from Petrie Bight to the Redbank Special Substances Facility was approved (Decision 57667).

Wivenhoe and Wolffdene Dams

A Water Resources Commission (WRC) report on Wivenhoe Dam operations was approved for public distribution in June (Decision 56933). Further investigations were requested and a review of the flood manual was ordered. The first discharge from the dam since completion in 1985 caused various bridges to be inundated and numerous bank slips occurred. A second WRC report on Brisbane River flooding and Wivenhoe operations was approved in July after a flood in May (the third in 1989) submerged bridges. Planning for the next major water resources proposal (Wolffdene Dam) was discussed at a number of Cabinet meetings, but this project was cancelled when the Labor Government took office (Decisions 56417, 56418, 57285, 57995).

Roma Street railway yards and the old Treasury Building

After many years of debate, Cabinet approved licensed casinos in 1981 (Decision 34683). The relocation of the Roma Street rail freight terminal operations to Acacia Ridge, costing \$28m, was approved in August 1989 (Decision 57353). The possible establishment of five casinos, including one as part of Roma Street's \$150m redevelopment, were mooted in September ('Mr Ahern's Casino Gamble', *Courier Mail*, 5/9/1989). Progress on 'The Roma Street Project', including the issuing of a casino licence, was discussed in October (Decision 57811). Yvonne Chapman, the Minister

for Transport and Ethnic Affairs, told Cabinet: 'In the interests of achieving the best possible overall development of the goods yards, and creating the perception that the Government is in full control of the development process from the outset, it is felt the marketing of the Roma Street goods yards must be more closely managed than just offering the land for sale, with a Casino licence attached' (Decision 57811).

In September Cabinet discussed the future of the George Street and William Street precinct, including the old Treasury Building, recommending the building be restored as Government offices rather than a hotel (Decision 57467). One week later this recommendation was reaffirmed: 'the Old Treasury Building be not made available for hotel use but retained for Government office accommodation for Departments currently in rented accommodation' (Decision 57528). In October Cabinet decided that the Department of Environment and Conservation 'is considered to be a suitable occupant' of the Old Treasury Building (Decision 57727).

Economy

Gas, ethanol and coal

Gas supply arrangements for the Queensland Alumina Ltd plant in Gladstone were approved in January (Decision 55985). Cabinet also made Decisions relating to the State Gas Pipeline (under construction), gas franchises, prices and regulations (Decisions 56079, 56169, 56372, 56456, 56646, 56661, 56699, 56934). In September Cabinet approved amendments relating to the sale of gas from the Cooper Basin in South West Queensland to South Australia (Decision 57417). Gas supply to Mt Isa was discussed in February and at the last Cabinet meeting before the election, but Ministers decided not to adopt Minister Katter's recommendation of 'finalisation of negotiations by Ministers' (Decisions 56079, 58087). In September Cabinet members endorsed a Queensland Government submission to a Commonwealth Review of Petrol Taxes:

No excise should apply to gas and shale oil production (including in the Territorial Sea) because State Government royalty arrangements are the appropriate mechanisms for extracting a community return from exploitation of State owned onshore, non-renewable, natural resources (Decision 57463).

Ethanol was discussed at six Cabinet meetings in 1989 ('State Tries to save \$1.75m in Ethanol Company Venture', *Courier Mail*, 5/1/1989). A report on the 'ethanol in petroleum industry' was considered in May with further discussions with BP approved, although Ahern said: 'there now seems to be little opportunity for an immediate initiation of an ethanol in petroleum industry' (Decision 56685). However, in September Minister Tenni recommended that the Government give 'strong support' to a consortium trying to establish a fuel ethanol industry' from sorghum in the Burdekin River Irrigation Area (Decision 57465). He said the fuel offered environmental benefits, a 'contribution to fuel security' and the 'ability to complement parallel development of Queensland's oil shale reserves'. The Government's 'strong support' for the establishment of a fuel ethanol industry was reaffirmed in early October, but in late October, Tenni told Cabinet: 'To assist negotiations with the oil companies who elsewhere in the world in the past have shown no disposition other than in experimental trials to lose their firm grip on the marketing of petroleum products, the consortium requires that the Government express its support in specific terms and is concerned about the current delays' (Decision 57599, 57821). The consortium, he said, wanted 'the future Government fuel supply contract' to 'provide a preference that the fuel supplied be an ethanol blended (normally 10%) motor spirit as the ethanol becomes available'. Further investigations were ordered instead.

There were eighteen Cabinet Decisions in 1989 relating to the coal export industry. In July 'an expansion study of the Abbot Point Coal Loading Facility' was approved, and the release of 77 blocks in the Central Queensland Coal Area was approved in July, with a further 28 sub-blocks in August; according to Minister Tenni: 'the outlook for the coal industry is now more favourable than it has been for several years' (Decisions 57012, 57056, 57344). Cabinet also approved new rail freight arrangements for coal exports in July:

The world coal market has been depressed as a result of widespread oversupply of coal and the general lack of sufficient demand. This depressed coal market situation has meant that virtually no new export coal projects have committed in Queensland or for that matter, in the rest of the world, since the early to mid-1980's. Recently, the coal market has shown a definite improvement with forecasts now being made of coal supply being insufficient to meet increased demand. Coal prices in the past two years have increased and the coal industry now perceives there to be a 'window of opportunity' for new coal projects commencing production in the early 1990's (Decision 57065)

Seven new mines were proposed, although the Premier cautioned: 'it is unlikely that all of the above projects will go ahead', and the Government needed 'substantially different rail freight and capital lodgement arrangements from those applying to projects which committed in the more bullish coal market conditions of the early 1980's (i.e. the post-1978 projects)'. He advocated 'rail freight arrangements which are essentially cost only (i.e. generally no State return in the freight rate), but with a coal price adjustment mechanism to provide the Government with some State return from the development of its coal resources in the event coal prices increase'. He warned mine closures were 'the significant risks' as 'the Government bears the risk that the project may cease operations before the loans have been fully repaid'.

The construction of railways and provision of carriages for 'all presently proposed new projects' would cost the Government \$480 million 'which would mean an annual debt servicing commitment of approximately \$80 million for 20 years'. Ahern assured them:

The Treasury believes that, with readjustment of future priorities (and this would not be without "pain"), the State's finances should be able to meet this commitment in the event that there is an unforeseen major downturn in the coal industry in the future resulting in all the new projects ceasing operation (Dec 57065).

The Submission was approved (Decision 57065).

In June Cabinet approved a Senate attempt to amend the Commonwealth Government's Resource Assessment Commission (RAC) Inquiry Bill, regarding the legislation as containing 'potential to erode States' rights. 'Opposition to the Bill by conservation groups is an indication that they see it as a threat to their ability to influence decisions through emotive calls for Commonwealth intervention in the "national interest"' (Decision 56885). Members were informed that mining companies supported the Bill. Cabinet members approved a Mineral Resources Bill intended to encourage the 'assessment, development and utilisation of mineral resources to the maximum extent practicable' (with amendments) in September (Decision 57395). Submissions on test drilling of 'coal bed methane' were considered in October and November, although a request for financial assistance to one exploration company was refused (Decisions 57765, 56086).

Queensland Nickel

In October nickel ore unloading facilities at Townsville were approved (Decision 57540). Minister Chapman informed members: 'Since April, 1988, Queensland Nickel has been importing nickel from New Caledonia through Townsville and then railing it to the Yabulu treatment works for processing. The operation is very inefficient and messy, and involves unloading from ships by grab and dumping it in piles on the wharf. From there it is loaded by front end loader into railway wagons which are shunted onto the wharf along temporary track and gradually made up into a train length with considerable shunting effort, for the trip to Yabulu. There is a considerable amount of dust, spillage, noise and loss of product and the whole operation is in urgent need of cleaning up'. Queensland Nickel had signed an agreement with QR in November 1988 to transport 1 million tonnes of ore per annum from Townsville to Yabulu, but had 'not proceeded with the other works necessary to clean up their operations because of the perceived requirement for an impact assessment statement'. Cabinet agreed to support the immediate construction of facilities.

Sandmining

In February Cabinet considered a \$24.5m compensation package for sandminers after their operations ceased on Moreton Island in December 1987 (Decisions 56016, 56087). Possible new locations included Rocky Point near Agnes Water, in the Bundaberg district. Upgrades in infrastructure at Agnes Water were discussed in April and at the end of May (Decisions 56577, 56764). Compensation was approved 'in principle' during May, with exploration allowed on Wild Cattle and Hummock Hill Islands, and on Middle Island near Agnes Water (Decisions 56692, 56698). Ministers agreed that a 'balanced mining/ conservation land use package' was to be 'presented to the public'.

Tourism

The Cabinet examined a number of Submissions throughout the year on marketing and publicity. In May members noted a Queensland Day newspaper supplement (Decision 56648). Queensland's participation in Osaka Expo 90, 'to be based on the Gladys Busch Bicentennial Doll Collection and the Ellis Rowan and Dorothy Gordon Wildflower paintings', was approved in June (Decision 56836). Queensland's contribution of \$2.1m for the Queensland and Australian exhibits at Expo 90 was confirmed at a second meeting that month (Decision 56954). In October \$930,000 for advertising campaigns - 'Discover our Queensland now!; This beautiful State of ours' (featuring Grant and Lisa Kenny) - was approved (Decision 57633).

The construction of a monorail at Jupiter's Casino, Broadbeach, was approved in January, and the contract was approved in April (Decisions 55986, 56569; 'Govt Ignores Tendering Row Over Monorail', *Courier Mail*, 26/4/1989; 'Monorail On Twisting Track', *Courier Mail*, 5/9/1989). In March Cabinet approved the sale of 49% of the Mirage resorts at Port Douglas and Southport, and the construction of a resort on Noosa's North Shore (Decisions 56231, 56233; 'Skase Sale: MPs Seek Equity Cut', *Courier Mail*, 9/3/1989; 'Green Light For Noosa Tourism Development', *Courier Mail*, 14/3/1989). In May the expansion of the Mirage resort at Port Douglas was approved 'in principle' (Decision 56602).

A \$1m loan was approved in July for the Queensland Events Corporation to fund the Gold Coast Grand Prix race (Decision 57062). Revenue was predicted to be \$43.4m and expenses were expected to be \$19.6m. Special Lease rents were discussed at several meetings, with a rate of '1% of unimproved value' approved in October (Decision 57704). Minister Harper stated: 'In recent times the value of the Crown real estate being sought by tourist orientated developers has escalated enormously due to increasing domestic and international market forces and consequently an increase in rentals, even in the investigating stages, is justified because of the demands'.

Some tourist resort proposals were not accepted. In July the purchase of land on the eastern side of Trinity Inlet was rejected; the developer was to be informed that the proposed 'pair' city to Cairns, including housing, marina, resort and other amenities, connected to Cairns by a road across Admiralty Island and a bridge over Smith's Creek, was 'not consistent with the State Government's strategic objectives for the area' (Decision 57016; 'No Bay Project: Govt', *Courier Mail*, 28/6/1989). In October Cabinet discussed the Trinity Point Hotel lease at Cairns. Premier Cooper informed members:

In September 1983, the Government announced that Trinity Point Hotel Pty. Ltd. was the successful applicant, and ... the company was awarded a three year Special Lease for investigation purposes expiring on 31 March, 1988, over an area of 80.9 hectares of the Cairns foreshore (Decision 57759).

'Now', he said, 'public opinion in Cairns is very strongly against the project. I announced in Cairns on 12 October 1989 this project would not proceed'. The developer threatened a claim for breach of contract, but Cabinet decided: 'No written or verbal response be made immediately on behalf of the Government to the claim for compensation made in the letter dated 14 October 1989 from Trinity Point Hotel Pty. Ltd'. A further Submission on the proposal was discussed in November, Cabinet deciding the developer's investigations were 'not satisfactory studies', and the proposal was 'not acceptable', so the lease application was declined, with up to \$5m approved to purchase the study reports from the developer (Decision 58002).

A number of proposals in the Whitsunday Islands and adjacent mainland were considered by Cabinet during 1989. The lease for a resort at Midge Point, south of Proserpine, was approved in February (Decision 56052). Development, rezoning and the granting of a Special Lease for this project were approved in September, and at the last National Party Cabinet meeting on 27 November (Decisions 57378, 57457, 58063). A proposed marina at Shute Harbour was approved in February (Decision 56003). Submissions relating to projects in the Whitsunday region were considered in June, August, September, October and November (Decisions 56812, 56874, 56937, 57084, 57233, 57411, 57830, 57955). Proposed resorts on two islands (St Bees and Keswick) were discussed at a number of Cabinet meetings, with a coastal island tourist development policy approved in June (Decisions 55824, 55925, 56785, 56794, 56814, 56846, 56848, 56904, 57085, 57322, 57361, 57460, 57507, 57529). West Molle Island's renaming as Daydream Island was approved in June (Decision 56991). The lease of Proserpine Airport to Ansett Airlines was approved in May after discussions at six meetings (Decisions 55822, 56334, 56352, 56480, 56538, 56579, 56658).

In January Cabinet approved a proposed resort at Florence Bay on Magnetic Island, off Townsville, followed by a second proposal at nearby Radical Bay in July (Decisions 55974, 57024; 'Barbs Fly As Resort Plans Forge Ahead', *Courier Mail*, 21/4/1989). However, Cabinet members were informed in July that the developer (Interwest Ltd) was 'only interested in Florence Bay, not in Radical Bay, and now threatened legal action' against the Government (Decision 57061). Ministers were informed that the present General Manager of Pacific Property Developments Ltd (a subsidiary of Interwest) 'is a past employee of the Queensland Tourism and Travel Corporation. Indeed the gentleman was the Corporation's Research and Regional Development Manager from April 1986 to December 1987. While the Corporation has no reason to suspect that any impropriety has occurred ... it has considered that he may have preconceived notions, albeit incorrect, of the Corporation's formal position'. Negotiations with Interwest Ltd about the Florence Bay development were 'terminated' in September, with a Japanese company (EIE) seeking to purchase the Interwest subsidiaries (Decision 57367).

Cabinet approved the construction of 438 units at the Kingfisher Bay Resort Village on Fraser Island in January (Decision 55805; "'White Shoe Brigade" Govt Under Fire Over Resort Plan App', *Courier Mail*, 20/1/1989). Leases on the Southport Spit were also approved in January and July (Decisions 55809, 55813, 57010). In April, a \$120m resort proposal at Couran on South Stradbroke Island was approved (Decision 56430). Decisions in connection with this development (including legislation) were approved in April, May, August and October (Decisions 56584, 56787, 57348, 57449, 57638). South Stradbroke Island park proposals were further discussed in November, when Minister Borbidge recommended 'the budgets submitted in the attachment in relation to "Thrushton" and "Idalia" (two inland cattle properties) be approved and a special allocation of \$583,000 be made available to the Department of Environment and Conservation for expenditure on the two properties' (Decision 57944). Previously Cabinet had decided to defer the question of management funding for Thrushton and Idalia National Parks 'indefinitely' (Decision 57263). A land swap with the developer resulted in Thrushton being declared a National Park, with 186ha on South Stradbroke to be declared as an Environmental Park ('Island Land Swap Needs Scrutiny', *Courier Mail*, 26/6/1989). Cabinet decided that funds to 'establish an effective management regime on "Idalia"' would be provided to the Department of Environment and Conservation by way of 'Unforeseen Expenditure' (Decision 57944).

Trade

In January Cabinet considered a 'Sister State' relationship with Shanghai (Decision 55891). Trade links between Fujian Province (China) and Queensland were approved in February (Decision 56005). Minister Borbidge announced in April that Queensland exports to China totalled \$91m in the first six months of the financial year ('House Hears of Boost in Queensland Exports to China', *Courier Mail*, 12/4/1989). Cabinet noted in June that the Hong Kong sharemarket fell 22% 'in a reaction to China's political crisis' (Decision 56901). In July Ministers agreed that Ministerial visits and Parliamentary delegations to China should be suspended and 'official contact with China be constrained ... at least until the end of 1989' (Decision 57128). A visit to Queensland by a Hubei Province educational delegation, originally scheduled for March, was approved in September (Decision 57407). In October Cabinet discussed a trip to Shanghai by the Queensland Youth Orchestra in January 1990 (Decision 57747). Ministers Clauson and Fraser said

'Following the violence in China in June there was for a time some doubt as to the advisability of proceeding with the visit to Shanghai', but:

Subsequent investigations made independently by the Queensland China Council and by the Queensland Youth Orchestra Executive have led to the conclusion that the visit would be warmly welcomed by the people of Shanghai and that it would not be interpreted as implying support for the violent actions of the Beijing Government (Decision 57747).

In August the members of Cabinet discussed a gift to the King of Thailand of a solar tracker hot water heater (Decision 57200):

Thai authorities are hardening their attitude and are demanding that the Queensland Government ensure the gift's delivery. At a recent private meeting sought by the Thai Ambassador, he assumed a somewhat unbending stance, saying that nondelivery of the gift would be a slight against the King of Thailand which could lead to economic repercussions for Queensland (Decision 57200).

Ministers agreed that the subject should be 'dealt with by the Premier's Department'. An overseas trip by the Minister for Industry was approved in October (Decision 57616). While in Japan, several kangaroos would be given to the Prefecture of Saitama, in recognition of the fifth anniversary of the signing of the 'Agreement on the Sister Relationship between the State of Queensland, and the Prefecture of Saitama, Japan'.

Marinas and canal estates

In January lease conditions for a canal estate at Sovereign Island (Broadwater) were approved (Decision 55916). An extension of the development was approved in April (Decision 56405). Approval for a land offer to Sanctuary Cove was approved in January, despite the fact that mangroves had been illegally reclaimed (Decision 55968). In March, amendments to the Sanctuary Cove Resort Act, allowing an increase in the numbers of blocks for sale, were approved (Decision 56354). The sale of Sanctuary Cove land and an adjustment of the project's boundaries were approved in July (Decision 57026). In September, the Sanctuary Cove Resort Act Amendment Bill was approved by Cabinet (Decision 57500). A proposed development at Toondah Harbour at Cleveland was rejected in January and in March, Cabinet decided that Special Lease 06/49741 at Toondah Harbour should be 'resumed for environmental protection' (Decisions 55967, 56397; 'Toondah Harbour Project Cancelled by Government', *Sunday Mail*, 29/1/1989). In May, Cabinet discussed a proposed canal estate at Point Halloran, rejected by the Redland Shire Council on environmental grounds (Decision 56638).

Social policy

In January an education campaign about smoking in restaurants and public places was approved (Decision 55858; 'Most People Who Dine Out Are Not Worried By Smokers, Rest', *Courier Mail*, 7/1/1989). Cabinet approved the Queensland Government's Family Policy in February, assessing that 80% of Queenslanders lived in a 'normal family situation' (Decision 56060). In June, Ministers discussed the recruiting of skilled Europeans for 'remoter areas of Queensland' (Decision 56899):

It is known that Queensland, which receives the vast bulk of interstate migration ... does not receive a significant proportion of overseas migration. With all States near to or below Zero Population Growth, serious social and economic problems will accrue to States unable to sustain their population levels (Decision 56899).

The Domestic Violence Bill and the establishment of the Queensland Domestic Violence Council were approved in March (Decisions 56278, 56379). Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Regulations were approved in July, as was the release of a booklet titled 'Our Family - Our Future' containing details of the Government's Families and Ageing Policies (Decisions 57130, 57183). Members of Cabinet approved the establishment 'in principle' of a Women's Policy

Unit in the Premier's Department in October, discussing the future role of the existing (Commonwealth-funded) Women's Information Service (Decision 57619). They authorised the Minister for Family Services to 'engage a suitable consultant to conduct consultations with relevant interest groups on details of the role and structure of a Women's Policy Unit'.

In November Cabinet approved the establishment of new Family Services office at Smithfield 'as soon as possible' (Decision 58070). Minister Nelson informed Ministers that had been 'a population explosion in urban Cairns and adjacent districts', with an increase in 'child abuse notifications'. She also said: 'Sexual abuse in adolescent girls and offending by youth are prevalent', adding: 'I am advised that the majority of offending youth in the Cairns urban area are from the Smithfield district whilst child abuse notifications have risen markedly there also' (Decision 58070). Funding for the Gold Coast Sexual Assault Service was approved 'in principle' at a meeting in October (Decision 57756). Minister Nelson informed Cabinet: 'the region has a very high incidence of sexual assault one in four girls being sexually assaulted by age 18 and one in eleven boys by the same age'.

In May members of Cabinet approved a Youth Services Mapping Project, followed by approval for 'Youth Week 1990' in July (Decisions 56749, 57074). The creation of a youth curfew working party was approved in May (Decision 56609). Cabinet approved a Youth (12-15) curfew urban pilot scheme in July, requesting a further report into the 'removal of children' by Police without a warrant (Decision 57081). The Queensland Government's Youth Policy was approved in August (Decision 57236). In October Cabinet approved a Queensland Government response to the Rights of the Child declaration by the Commonwealth:

Ratification of the Draft Convention on the Rights of the Child be not supported, unless appropriate reservations, which are agreed upon by State and Territory Governments, are placed in the Convention at the time of ratification or accession.

It cannot be doubted that the objects of the Convention are worthy. The Convention could be of considerable use in those areas of the world where children are disadvantaged. However, Australian children enjoy unparalleled protection and advantages and it can be seen that the spirit of the Convention does not differ a great deal from State Government policy in relation to children. The real effect of the ratification of the Convention may be to remove jurisdiction from the States and hand it to the Commonwealth (Decision 57751).

Public release of the Government Youth Policy was approved in October (Decision 57816).

AIDS continued to be an important health issue, as it had in previous years ('Victims of AIDS Housed Secretly in State', *Courier Mail*, 27/2/1989). New AIDS controls were approved in January, and a Health Department submission to the Commonwealth on Queensland's AIDS Strategy was approved in April (Decisions 55833, 56454). In May a proclamation about safe needle disposal was endorsed, followed by Cabinet approval for 'an education programme on the safe disposal of injecting equipment' (Decisions 56590, 56761).

The situation regarding AIDS and Indigenous communities was discussed in August and October. First, the members of Cabinet decided 'the Minister for Community Services and Ethnic Affairs be directed to ensure that condom vending machines were installed in areas under his control at Aboriginal and Islander Communities in an attempt to combat sexually transmitted diseases, especially the AIDS virus' (Decision 57301). Then, Cabinet approved 'in principle' Queensland's AIDS and HIV public health strategy. According to Minister Gibbs, 'Palm Island represents the most potentially serious focus of AIDS in Queensland today'; 'Communicable Diseases Advisory Panel has estimated that there are now 300 to 400 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people already infected with the HIV virus and 30 to 40 with AIDS in rural and urban Australia. Some of these have now died'. He informed the Cabinet that seven Community Health Workers (AIDS) had been employed, and Commonwealth funding for the programme's continuation would be sought ('Palm Island AIDS Fight Gets \$1.5m, *Courier Mail*, 10/10/1989).

Cabinet considered a Submission in May from the Task Force on 'People with an Intellectual Handicap', deciding that 'no action be taken to release the report publicly' (Decision 56676). In June, the Intellectually Disabled Citizens Regulations were approved; two forms used "Makaton" symbols (Decision 56930). Amendments to the Mental Health Services Regulations were approved in June, to cover the transfer of security patients from the Corrective Services Commission to the Health Dept's John Oxley Memorial Hospital (Decision 56961). Ministers were also informed in June of a backlog of Mental Health patients, and further amendments to the Regulations were approved in August (Decisions 56993, 57319).

Industrial disputes

Pilots strike

1645 civil aviation pilots employed by the two major operators in Australia (Ansett and Australian) walked off their jobs in late August, stopping all domestic flights. Within days international airlines and the RAAF were carrying thousands of passengers between major cities. Minister Borbidge was despatched to Europe, seeking charter aircraft and crew (Decision 57590). Cabinet members considered financial assistance to businesses affected by the industrial action (Decisions 57491, 57591). Ministers decided on 9 October to approve a mail campaign 'to inform tourist operators of concessions which may be available on deferment of Liquor Licence Fees and Payroll Tax payments' and the establishment of 'a secretariat in the Premier's Department to co-ordinate the campaign and to handle enquiries' (Decision 57639).

Borbidge informed Cabinet on 30 October that some 'five star properties' in North Queensland had reported 10% occupancy rates (Decision 57826). In November Cabinet agreed that 'any new airline establishing in Queensland be eligible for a five year exemption on all State Government taxes and charges subject to the airline agreeing to the implementation of no strike clauses in agreements with employees' (Decision 57959). In late November, when the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation estimated that the strike had cost the state \$76m in the first five weeks, Borbidge reported that 'a British Boeing 737-300 aircraft, chartered for six months by the Queensland Government' (painted with a Queensland logo) had arrived in Brisbane on 6 November (Decision 57992). He said 'the aircraft is operated by Ansett with a British crew', and 'the charter of this aircraft has enabled Ansett to service a greater number of airports'.

Unions

Unions, waterfront reform and calls for a 38 hour week were discussed at meetings throughout 1989. In January Cabinet decided to oppose the deduction of union fees from Public Service workers, and in February, agreed there should be 'no preference' for companies 'which employed union labour' (Decisions 55830, 56159; 'State Axes Forced Unionism', *Courier Mail*, 1/3/1989; 'Ahern Steps Up Anti-union Push', *Courier Mail*, 2/3/1989). Cabinet approved the issue of a 'Code of Conduct' to public servants 'engaging in political activity', in January, obliging them to 'refrain from making public statements criticising such policies, administration and operation of a Department or its Minister, or endorsing the views of other organisations' (Dec 55993).

Voluntary Employment Agreements (VEAs) were approved in February, with further changes endorsed in April (Decisions 56160, 56425; 'Employers Refuse to Back Govt on VEAs', *Courier Mail*, 26/2/1989; 'Unions Denied a Hearing During VEA Applications', *Courier Mail*, 7/4/1989). The establishment of a Waterfront Task Force was approved in April, with reports considered in May and June (Decisions 56530, 56639, 56777, 56860, 56976; 'State to Tackle "Crazy, Shameful" Waterfront Practices', *Courier Mail*, 11/4/1989). Queensland Government opposition to an Australian Workers Union application for a 38 hour week was approved in September (Decision 57498). A major dispute between the Queensland Government and the Waterside Workers Federation began in November after union action commenced against Patrick Stevedoring, the Port of Brisbane Authority and the union over woodchip exports and the unloading of imported timber (Decisions 57928, 57968). Cabinet members agreed that 'support be given for

appropriate legal responses by the Port of Brisbane Authority and other port users' to combat 'illegal industrial activity if need be' (Decision 57928).

Legal

Police and prisons

Given the results of the Fitzgerald Inquiry, it is unsurprising that the Police Force was discussed at many Cabinet meetings throughout 1989. In January a review was noted and a submission on the Powers of the Police was partially approved (Decisions 55969, 55970). The introduction of a new Police Act was approved in April, with amended Rules relating to 'physique, age and religious belief of recruits' approved in May (Decisions 56473, 56588).

One of the most important issues for the Cabinet, as a result of the Fitzgerald Inquiry, was the appointment and dismissal of the Police Commissioner. In April Cabinet members decided that the grounds for the dismissal of the Commissioner 'may be extended, from lack of good behaviour to include insufficient diligence or incompetence' (Decision 56440). They also agreed that:

Provision be made that charges of insufficient diligence or incompetence against the Commissioner be established to the satisfaction of an independent party such as a judge or the Independent Commission Against Corruption which has also been proposed by the Government (Decision 56440).

In July the drafting of the new Police Act was approved, but a week later Cabinet rescinded that Decision and give new instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel with regard to the 'necessary legislative changes' to 'enable passage of the required legislation during the September session following passage of the Criminal Justice Commission Bill' (Decisions 57117, 57185). These administrative and management alterations included:

Advising and drafting the necessary legislative provisions relating to the Police Department incorporating prescribed relationships between the Criminal Justice Commission, the Police Minister, the Police Commissioner and the Police Department, including respective authorities and responsibilities in various matters including misconduct and matters which are the subject of complaint (Decision 57185).

Cabinet members discussed the Police Act briefing notes in August, approving the drafting of the proposed Police Administration Act which would 'enable the new Commissioner to manage the Police Department and to go about the task of introducing the necessary reforms, unfettered by the present restrictive legislation, but accountable to a Police Minister' (Decision 57305). On 18 September, Cabinet approved a Police Administration Bill which included a Clause relating to the appointment of the Commissioner, but one week later amended that Decision, approving the withdrawal of legislation and the 'preparation of alternative legislation to allow for the appointment of a Police Commissioner' (Decisions 57490, 57525).

On 25 September Cabinet approved an amendment to the Firearms Act amendment imposing an automatic prohibition on gun ownership for five years after a drug conviction (Decision 57492). Body armour (from Israel) for Police officers was approved at two Cabinet meetings in October (Decisions 57635, 57699). In November the import of military-style firearms was discussed. Minister Lester recommended approving a "Generic Statement" intended 'to prohibit the importation of firearms, other than firearms being imported for defence, law enforcement or other official government purposes, which have a rapid killing capacity in an endeavour to prevent multiple killings such as the Hoddle Street and Queen Street massacres' but Cabinet decided the submission should be 'not approved' (Decision 57840). Lester's recommendation that \$200,000 be allocated for the promotion of the "Crimestoppers" campaign was also not approved (Decision 57937).

A road safety programme was endorsed by Cabinet in February (Decision 56063). Minister McKechnie told Cabinet that Queensland's road toll for 1988 (540 fatalities) was 22% higher than in 1987, and was the largest increase in

Australia. 60% of fatalities in single-vehicle crashes, he said, were alcohol-affected. Random Breath Testing, introduced in Queensland on 1 December 1988, had been controversial from the beginning ('Random Testing Too Late - Ahern', *Courier Mail*, 2/1/1989). In October, the 'introduction of the .05 alcohol limit upon motorists and the random breath testing scheme' was blamed for 'a loss of clientele and income' in licensed clubs (Decision 57627). Transport Act amendments, approved in April, allowed new parking meter systems to be introduced (Decision 56410).

Cabinet discussed the subject of Traffic Offence recording at the final National Party Cabinet meeting held on 27 November, hearing that a centralised system 'would increase Government Revenue and ensure that the history record of drivers in Queensland would be maintained up-to-date which would result in better enforcement action against those drivers who showed an irresponsible attitude towards the traffic laws of this State and other road users generally' (Decision 58036). Minister Chapman recommended extra funds be allocated to the Transport Department because 'a substantial backlog of unentered Traffic Offence Notices still exists thereby preventing the computerised driver records system from achieving its full potential to serve the public and provide a fully effective traffic law enforcement aid', but Cabinet members decided that the costs should be met from 'normal budgets'.

Correctional Centres (prisons) were discussed at numerous Cabinet meetings in 1989. The closure of the Boggo Road prison, and transfer of prisoners to four new centres at Wacol was approved in March (Decision 56245). However, the escape of six 'dangerous prisoners' on 11 March prompted further discussions, including one where a \$10,000 reward approved for information and capture of the six escapees was approved (Decisions 56288, 56290, 56344). Clauson told Ministers 'A secure operations room will be built and manned at Brisbane Correctional Centre' (Decision 56288), adding:

The design and location of Brisbane Correctional Centre is fundamentally flawed. We have known this for some time and the Government has already purchased land on which to build a replacement. Tenders for the start of work on the Remand Centre and the Reception Centre are to be accepted shortly. However, further action is needed to hold the Centre together until the replacements are available (Decision 56288).

Officials said they feared that an attack on the Prison could be made by the escapees.

An extra \$1.7m for prisons was approved in April (Decision 56485). On 24 April Cabinet noted a report from the Cabinet Budget Committee meeting on 17 April (Decision 56577). The CBC approved 'the provision of additional security at Boggo Road' as 'an urgent matter. The cost of \$1.2M is to be met 50% from Works Department normal allocations and 50% by special additional funding' (Decision 56577). An escape attempt using a grappling hook and rope ladder by 'violent and dangerous prisoners' was foiled in July (Decision 57104). \$140,000 for cameras and extra security equipment at Boggo Road was approved in July (Decision 57164). On 4 September, Cabinet noted a report from a Cabinet Budget Committee meeting (Decision 57397), approving \$90m for the Corrective Services Commission to establish the Moreton Correctional Facility and close the Boggo Road Prison in January 1990 rather than December 1991 as originally planned (Decision 57397). The Boggo Road Prison was progressively closed between 1989 and 2000.

In April Cabinet approved a management contract for the privately-run Borallon Correctional Centre, and called for expressions of interest from possible operators to operate and manage the prison (Decisions 56419, 56420). Tenders from two companies were considered in August, and the contract was awarded to Wormald Security (Decision 57256). Cabinet discussed the need for a 140 cell women's prison in September, deciding that it was 'still too early to say whether the growth in female prisoner numbers would be sustained in the longer term given the trend towards non-custodial correction measures' so planning for a 50 cell prison was approved instead (Decision 57397). Cabinet, already having agreed in April to leave youth corrections under the Department of Family Services, decided on 25 September not to allocate funding for the transfer of 17 year olds from prisons to juvenile justice institutions, despite earlier promises (Decisions 56451, 57516; 'No More Jail Cells For 17-Year-Olds', *Courier Mail*, 2/1/1989). Ministers decided, at the final National Party Cabinet meeting on 27 November to defer a decision on funding for the Victims of

Crime Association until the Corrective Services Commission has had 'an opportunity to consider the possibility of providing on-going funding from a Trust Fund constituted by contributions from prisoners' wages' (Decision 58038).

A review of Queensland's Fire and Emergency Services was considered by Cabinet in February, with Ministers deciding not to publicly release the report (Decisions 56107, 56110; 'Govt Brawl Stalls Plan To Upgrade Fire Service', *Courier Mail*, 21/2/1989; 'Fire Safety Upgrade in Qld Stalled For A Year', *Courier Mail*, 28/2/1989). Recommendations from the Fire Services Review were approved 'in principle' during May, and 'no public announcement' was to be made (Decision 56640). A submission on Fire Service Levies was discussed by Cabinet in June (Decision 56973). In October a Fire Service Bill combining the state's Fire Brigades and Rural Fires Acts was approved (Decision 57565).

Environment

Queensland Government opposition to the World Heritage listing of the Wet Tropics rainforests continued in 1989 after the area was inscribed on the UNESCO list on 9 December 1988. A proposed management plan was discussed in January and March (Decisions 55945, 56353). The State Government's challenge was rejected by the High Court on 30 June 1989. In July members considered a Submission from the Premier's Department outlining the future of legal challenges to World Heritage (Decision 57018). They were informed that since the High Court had decided that the Commonwealth Government could 'pass legislation to implement a perceived international obligation', that 'the potential power of the Commonwealth under the External Affairs power is almost limitless'. According to Ahern 'the only remedy is for a future Commonwealth Government to restore by referendum the federal nature of the Constitution and give back to the States the powers the founding fathers originally intended them to have' (Decision 57018).

In October Cabinet gave 'total commitment' for 'the current legal challenge in the Federal Court be reaffirmed' (Decision 57705). Premier Cooper and Minister Borbidge noted that a previous Decision advising the Prime Minister of the Queensland Government's 'firm conviction to retain management control over State owned lands' had not been sent to Canberra 'because of political developments in Queensland'. They submitted:

It is the opinion of senior legal officers in the Solicitor General's office dealing with the Federal Court challenge, and supported unanimously by members of the Inter- Departmental Committee set up by Premier's Department that there should be no withdrawal of the legal challenge to the imposition of regulations prohibiting commercial harvesting of timber in the World Heritage area (Decision 57705).

The Solicitor General's office has further advised that the recent decision of the High Court in relation to the legality of the World Heritage listing on its existing boundaries, has clearly given the Commonwealth Government the lawful right to act to protect World Heritage values in the Wet Tropics. These powers of regulation are contained within the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act. The appropriateness of the imposition of current bans imposed is the subject of the Queensland Government legal challenge in the Federal Court. It is most important to note that this legal challenge will be fought on scientific rather than legal grounds (Decision 57705).

In November Cabinet noted a submission regarding the proposed management plan for Crown Lands in the Wet Tropics (Decision 57967). Borbidge informed members 'the release of the zoning proposals will serve to demonstrate the Queensland Government's commitment to continuing public participation in the development of a management plan for the area. Whereas the Commonwealth government has announced a number of initiatives, including its Rainforest Consultative Committee, it as yet has nothing concrete to show in support of its claims to Wet Tropics management'.

A hydro-electric scheme on the Tully and Millstream Rivers, partly within the World Heritage Area, was discussed at several meetings. In June land purchases up to \$5m were approved by Cabinet (Decision 56941). Cabinet members considered the project's potential impact on inland diversion schemes (the "Bradfield Scheme") in August, approving:

The concept of inland diversion of the waters of the Burdekin, Herbert and Tully Rivers be reaffirmed and recognised as a long term prospect dependent on overall economic viability which should be taken into consideration whenever projects committing the water resources of those rivers are being planned or reviewed (Decision 57283).

In September Cabinet was informed 'it is most unlikely that construction of the Tully Millstream hydro power station on a Build, Own and Operate basis (BOO) would result in cheaper power than construction and operation on a conventional Queensland Electricity Commission basis' (Decision 57444). The proposal was later abandoned.

Members of Cabinet discussed the 'Greenhouse Effect' at nine meetings in 1989. In April they heard that delay 'could unnecessarily increase the State's economic vulnerability to decisions taken elsewhere' affecting 'valuable export industries' (Decision 56520). Reports from the Water Council, and the Minerals and Energy Council, considered in July and August, noted 'uncertainty' about 'the dimensions, impacts and timing of any long-term climate change', and the need for 'greater co-ordination of all major studies and groups currently investigating this matter in Australia' (decisions 57043, 57247). Support for the establishment of an ethanol industry was seen as a 'positive impact in terms of the greenhouse effect' (Decision 57465). In October members were informed:

Public interest in environmental problems has never been greater. Some of the major concerns at present include the Greenhouse Effect, the dangers of radiation, conservation of flora and fauna, air and water pollution, and chemical residues in food (Decision 57636).

On 30 October Cabinet noted a report from a meeting of the Australia and New Zealand Environment Council held 'to consider global environmental issues associated with predicted climate change due to the greenhouse effect' (Decision 57789). Minister Borbidge informed them:

Some Governments (notably South Australia and Victoria) gave support to the setting of targets for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland were strongly opposed to such targets at this time (Decision 57789).

Marine Parks amendments were approved in April (Decision 56399). Whale watching guidelines as part of the Hervey Bay/Great Sandy Strait Marine Park zoning plan were approved for public release and comment in June (Decision 56979). The Hervey Bay Marine Park was approved by Cabinet in September (Decision 57440). A Coastal and Estuarine Management plan was considered by Ministers in late November, with a Coastal Wetland Inventory approved 'in principle', but 'additional funding for consultancies' related to planning and 'system analysis' was 'to be considered further following the Treasury review of the Budget in early 1990' (Decision 58075).

Indigenous affairs

Hearings for the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCADC) began in 1987. Recommendations from the Royal Commission were approved in January (Decisions 55864, 55977). A working party for the construction of a new watchhouse at Wujal Wujal near Cooktown was approved in June, with Minister Katter stating he accepted the recommendation for 'direct consultation with Aboriginal people' in the design but believed 'it is hard to contemplate how a cell can be built upon racial lines' (Decision 56967).

One week later Cabinet approved 'urgent discussions' to express the Queensland Government's concern about the scope of the Commission's inquiries in Queensland' (Decision 56967). According to Premier Ahern, 'little new information is being ascertained' and 'the manner in which the Commission is being conducted in Queensland has caused various incidents to be sensationalised'. A meeting in August approved a legal challenge to the Commissioner's authority. In October Cabinet noted a Submission on the Powder-Law Report 'on the Incidence of Rising Suicides by Aborigines on Queensland Communities Whilst in Custody' (Decision 57800). The Queensland Government submission to the RCADC was amended at the final Cabinet meeting before the election:

The principle that imprisonment should be utilized as a sanction of last resort is supported. However, there needs to be further assessment of the need for legislation and/or other means of achieving this goal (Decision 58077).

Previously the recommendation had been 'not supported'.

The long-running legal fight over Native Title ('Queensland vs. Mabo and Ors') was discussed at two 1989 meetings. Cabinet approved \$232,100 'for the Mabo case' in July (Decision 57012). In August members were informed the 'case rests on a denial of Queensland law relating to land ownership on Murray Island', and would be referred to the High Court (Decision 57260). Hearings at Murray Island for an 'alternative land allocation formula' were approved.

The transfer of health, hospital and medical services in Indigenous communities from the Department of Community Services to the Health Department was considered at several Cabinet meetings in 1989. In June the transfer of Maternal and Child Health services at the Aboriginal communities of Bamaga, Cherbourg, Palm Island, Woorabinda and Yarrabah from the Department of Community Services to the Health Department was approved (Decision 56823). Cabinet discussed funds for the maintenance of Maternal and Child Health buildings at Bamaga, Yarrabah, Cherbourg, Woorabinda and Palm Island in October, deciding that the costs would be met from the existing Community Services budget (Decision 57631). Minister Fitzgerald recommended \$163,700 be approved, stating it would be 'impossible for the budget of the Department of Community Services to accommodate this level of expenditure on health facilities without curtailing other programs already approved'. Buildings on other Indigenous communities were not mentioned.

On 23 October Cabinet authorised Federal Court proceedings, on behalf of the Queensland Government, 'to challenge the authority and legal constitution of a proposed Human Rights Commission Inquiry into the Provision of Medical Services to certain Aboriginal Communities in North Queensland' (Decision 57755). Barrister George Brandis was engaged to represent the Queensland Government. Minister Gibbs recommended, on 20 November, that Cabinet members approve 'an allocation of special funds ... to the amount of \$179,755 during the current year and a maximum of \$486,660 for the 1990/91 year, \$115,000 for Hopevale, \$14,300 for Wujal Wujal, \$36,900 for Weipa South, \$153,400 for Lockhart River, \$58,100 for Pormpuraaw, and \$90,500 for Kowanyama ... to bring these facilities to a reasonable standard of repair', but Cabinet decided that no extra funds would be allocated (Decision 57964).

Other Indigenous community facilities were also discussed by Cabinet. Canteen licences at Lockhart River and Weipa South were approved in January and March (Decisions 55885, 56307). Doomadgee's water supply was mentioned in March and approved in September (Decisions 56388, 57516). In September, approval was given for the payment of \$267,899 from the Aborigines Welfare Fund to Doomadgee Inc for stock held in the Retail Store owned by the Mission Board (Decision 57514). The situation at Thursday Island, where the lack of water had become serious during 1988, was noted in June, when Cabinet learned \$23m was needed for a new water supply dam on Prince Of Wales Island and pipelines to Horn and Thursday Islands (Decision 56876). \$2.45m for a new dam was approved in September (Decision 57487).

Electricity supplies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities were discussed in April and June, with Ministers Katter and Tenni reporting that the Queensland Electricity Commission had resisted requests because the Commission believed that Aboriginal communities 'closely resembled those at mining communities' (Decisions 56434, 56905). However, supply arrangements were approved one week afterwards (Decision 56905). In October, Cabinet considered the supply of electricity to Torres Strait islands, approving an electrification project 'based on the most cost effective technology in terms of life cycle and recurrent costs utilising renewable energy sources integrated with conventional diesel engine generators' (Decision 57672).

A proposed prison diversionary pilot project at Townsville, recommended by the RCADC, was discussed by the Cabinet from January to October. There were issues with the site's selection and service provision, as well as the need to legislate immunity for staff (Decisions, 55996, 56337, 56338, 56516, 56574, 56684, 56897, 57105, 57351,

57546; 'Land Swap Was Favor For Party Member, Parlt Told', *Courier Mail*, 5/4/1989). Funding for transport, housekeeping and staff salaries was not secured. Eventually, Ministers were advised in October that the facility would not be proceeded with because 'Commonwealth funding would not be available for a diversionary facility at Townsville because other areas are perceived as having greater need' (Decision 57823).

The Commonwealth considers that Townsville has sufficient services to meet local needs. This position does not accord with that of the Townsville Aboriginal groups who maintain a need does exist (Decision 57823).

Cabinet decided the Queensland Government would request Commonwealth funding for two pilot diversionary facilities at Mt Isa and Cairns instead.

Other events

Cabinet approved, in March, reforms of the Picture Theatres and Film Commission, intended to stop 'an excess number of picture theatres' being opened and 'a drop in the standard of films exhibited' (Decision 56302). In November, amendments to the Films Review Act were approved, because 'the Films Board of Review does not have the capacity and flexibility to take action other than prohibiting the distribution of films and videos if it feels that the Federal authorities have given a film or video an inappropriate classification' (Decision 57976). Minister Henderson recommended the change to 'ensure that the Queensland community is fully protected from films and videos which have received an inappropriate classification by the Commonwealth Censor' by 'giving the Films Board of Review the additional power to recommend the reclassification of films and videos'.

In June Cabinet approved the Libraries and Archives Regulations 1989 (Decision 56902). A meeting in August noted 'the new State Archives building and funding required for the transfer from existing facilities' (Decision 57226). The establishment of a State Zoo ("QZoo") was discussed at Cabinet meetings throughout the year. Three submissions regarding a potential site at Cape Bowling Green, south of Townsville were considered (Decisions 56523, 56978, 57023). The establishment of a State Zoo Working Party was approved in August (Decision 57359). A second possible site, at Bulimba Creek in Brisbane was discussed in September as part of a Submission on a proposed Expo 95 (Decision 57482). The last Decision recorded at a National Party Cabinet meeting, on 27 November 1989, authorised the Minister for Tourism and Minister for Environment, Conservation and Forestry to 'commence discussions on the possible acquisition of land for the establishment of QZoo at Townsville and/or Millmerran and report back to Cabinet on the outcome' (Decision 58095).

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