

also provide that same service to all of us in this House day in, day out. As members of parliament we are fortunate to be working with such dedicated, positive and proficient people, and I thank them for that privilege.

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.27 pm): I, too, would like to thank my fellow members of Estimates Committee F and also the staff who ably served that committee—however, with the one exception in terms of the inflexibility and rigidity of the rulings of the chair of that committee, the member for Cook. I suggest the next time he wants to go on his 'how to be a referee' tours to New Zealand he learns how to be fairer and more equitable in the delivery of the committee hearing so that the estimates committee process can be delivered in a much fairer manner.

Apart from that, I was extremely disappointed in the responses I received from the minister. They were all—every one—written, prepared answers from his departmental staff that in many cases had nothing to do with the question that I asked. The estimates committee process would be much better served if there were guidelines for the answers to be given, just as there are guidelines for questions in terms of what members can and cannot ask. I am very disappointed that that process is not in place for responses by ministers.

There was one issue that particularly galled me. That relates to the response I received about the process for election of the new members to the Queensland Racing board, for which the minister has overall responsibility under the act. Four people were selected from the industry to vote for. They went out to a supposedly independent recruiting agency called the Northern Recruitment agency. This was done at the current Queensland Racing board's request. Northern Recruitment states on its website—

... we go forth into the marketplace singularly on their—

that is, the client's—

behalf.

In other words, they are indicating that they will get a determined result for whoever hires them. In this case the chairman and the QR board hired these people. One of the people who has been on the board for four years is respected solicitor, Mr Bill Andrews, who applied to be on that short list. Guess what? He did not make the short list. He did not have enough experience to get on the board after he had been on there for four years. It is an absolute indictment on a great person in Queensland racing that he did not make the short list. Who did make the short list? We have one Neville Stewart, a long-time friend of Bob Bentley from the breeding industry. He is a long-time compatriot going back to the QPC days. Surprise, surprise! Neville, while still being the chairman of the Toowoomba Turf Club, who agreed with Mr Bentley's proposal to put in a new track to replace the grass track at Toowoomba, is on that particular short list to be selected by other groups.

It will be a money-back, odds-on, but worse-case scenario that the quinella for the elected representatives will be Mr Wayne Milner, who non-one is arguing about, and Neville Stewart. That is the quinella that will be elected in terms of Mr Bentley's direction. I ask the minister if he is prepared to see the whole industry brought into disrepute over the process that has been followed by the current board.

The other issue that I have is the minister's response that the government is giving out \$38 million. I refer to the Governor's speech on 21 April where she says—

My government will fund \$38 million in new tourism marketing infrastructure initiatives.

I looked hard to find the so-called extra \$12 million in the budgetary papers this year. It is hidden. I looked everywhere and could not find it. I asked the minister who fumbled and faddled and then came up with, 'Oh, we have got \$12 million coming in but cabinet has to talk about that in September.' The tourism industry is doing it very tough right now. I do not know if the minister knows it, but there have been jobs lost in the tourism industry all over Queensland. I urge the minister to go and see the people in Cairns. Yet cabinet will talk about this \$12 million in September. There is no money in the budget. It talked about swapping the money for the RTOs. It was not in the budget. It is taking money from the RTOs and \$5.95 million is going into the department. Now, surprise, surprise, it is coming back in. That was announced just prior to the estimates. They are fiddling and faddling about who is responsible for tourism. It is all a knee-jerk reaction while the tourism industry in Queensland is falling away completely.

I congratulate the staff members at the estimates committee who did a great job in auditing my figures for the Minister for Transport where she gave 45 ums and 16 ers in her three minute answer.

**Hon. D BOYLE** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (12.32 pm): I welcome the report of Estimates Committee F though I must put on the record that I am dismayed by the honourable member for Warrego's tawdry and incorrect comments impugning my integrity as well as the information that was provided by me and the department to the committee during the estimates hearing.

As highlighted and detailed during estimates, the Bligh Labor government is well and truly exceeding its commitment of \$700 million for grants and subsidies to local governments across Queensland over a five-year period. We are, in fact, providing \$880 million—that is easy to work out,