1. The *Guidelines for the Grant of Indemnities and Legal Assistance to Ministers and Assistant Ministers* (the Ministerial Guidelines), which are contained in the Queensland Ministerial Handbook at Appendix 7, state the principles and practices for determining the provision of legal assistance and/or indemnities to Ministers in relation to investigations, inquiries, civil proceedings and criminal proceedings.
2. A review was undertaken of the Ministerial Guidelines relating to civil proceedings involving defamation claims against Ministers and former Ministers.
3. Amendments to the Ministerial Handbook (section 3.9) confirm that Ministers need to exercise care when making statements which could be seen as defamatory.
4. Amendments to the Ministerial Guidelines expressly state that it can be a condition of a grant of indemnity for defamation claims that the Minister has to obtain appropriate legal advice about any necessary steps, including to mitigate any damages the State may be liable for if the statement made is ultimately found to be defamatory. The amendments also make it clear that if a Minister does not take appropriate steps, the decision-makers may take that factor into account in considering whether to amend or withdraw a grant.
5. Cabinet approved amendments to the *Guidelines for the Grant of Indemnities and Legal Assistance to Ministers and Assistant Ministers*.
6. Cabinet approved amendments to the Queensland Ministerial Handbook.
7. *Attachments*
* [*Guidelines for the Grant of Indemnities and Legal Assistance to Ministers and Assistant Ministers*](Attachments/Guideline.pdf)
* [Amended Queensland Ministerial Handbook](Attachments/Handbook.pdf)