

THURSDAY, 21 JUNE 2001

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. R. K. Hollis, Redcliffe) read prayers and took the chair at 9.30 a.m.

PETITION

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petition—

Fisheries Management

Mr Wellington from 2112 petitioners, requesting the House to (a) immediately stop the implementation of the Fisheries Amendment Bill and (b) undertake an independent inquiry into fisheries management in Queensland.

PAPER**MINISTERIAL PAPERS**

Minister for Tourism and Racing and Minister for Fair Trading (Mrs Rose)—

National Classification Code (Amendment No. 2)

Guidelines for the classification of films and videotapes (Amendment No. 3).

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**Kelvin Grove Urban Village; QUT, Kelvin Grove Campus**

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.32 a.m.), by leave: I am pleased to advise the House that state cabinet has approved a master plan for the 17-hectare Kelvin Grove Urban Village, centred on the old Gona Barracks, following a submission from the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing, Robert Schwarten. This major project, on the doorstep of the CBD, forms a key part of the state government's City West strategy. As part of the government's Smart State strategy, we are supporting QUT's plans to develop a creative industries precinct in and around the village.

There has been extensive and direct consultation on the development of the master plan with local residents, industry, indigenous representatives and the RSL, and the feedback has been very positive. The village will provide a mix of affordable housing—both public and private—as well as commercial, educational and recreational uses. The Kelvin Grove Urban Village master plan provides for:

- a main street village precinct as a central focus;
- a mix of uses along a main street including retail, university, commercial and residential developments;
- linking Kelvin Grove Road and the QUT campus with a new main street;
- a new entrance at the existing barracks gate and additional road access to the site;
- residential uses spread throughout the site;
- maintaining Blamey Street as a major access point;
- a linear park within the natural valley of the site connecting McCaskie Park and Victoria Park;
- retention of significant vegetation;
- recognition of the site's heritage, including natural, indigenous, cultural and military heritage;
- making best use of existing and proposed public transport services and infrastructure; and
- on-road bike lanes as well as off-road bike paths and pedestrian access throughout.

Cabinet also authorised a joint venture agreement between the Department of Housing and QUT that would coordinate infrastructure and construction works.

This is a once-in-a-century chance to develop a huge parcel of land close to the CBD with established transport links right next door to a major university and close to schools, hospitals and other recreational facilities such as the new Roma Street Parkland. I table a draft of the plan for the information of members. I hope that they will take the opportunity to read it.

This is not the only exciting thing happening in Kelvin Grove. The new urban village will be enhanced by the revitalisation of the Kelvin Grove campus. Kelvin Grove State High and Primary Schools will join forces in 2002 to provide inner Brisbane's first combined campus comprising all grades from preschool to year 12. The Minister for Education, Anna Bligh, and I went out to the school last Friday to announce the changes. Schools like this are known as P-12. Education Queensland is increasing the number of P-12s in areas which have the necessary numbers of children and schools to support them to provide seamless, quality public education from preschool through to high school.

Through reinvigorated, community-focused public schools, we are working to ensure our young people are equipped for the workplaces of the future and to become leaders in the Smart State. The Kelvin Grove amalgamation will result in three subschools, comprising:

- a junior school for kindergarten to year 5, with a special small school environment within the existing primary and preschool buildings and grounds;

- a middle school for students from years 6 to 9, featuring all the innovative New Basics teaching and learning programs; and

- a senior school for years 10 to 12 students, trialling the current wide range of 57 subject choices, schools of excellence and extension courses.

Plus new arts, gymnasium and senior school buildings! This is a smart school with a smart future.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Bio 2001

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.36 a.m.), by leave: As Minister for Trade, tomorrow I am leaving on a trade mission to San Diego where I will lead a delegation of 90 Queenslanders to the world's largest and most important biotechnology convention and exhibition, Bio 2001. If we are to stay ahead as Australia's Smart State it is vital that we take full advantage of this massive event. Bio 2001 will attract more than 10,000 industry leaders from 950 biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centres and related organisations from 34 nations, with all US states represented as well.

The 950 organisations are involved in the research and development of health care, agricultural, industrial and environmental biotechnology products. These are precisely the people and organisations that we must talk to and deal with in order to create a vibrant biotechnology industry that will create thousands of long-term, new-age jobs for Queenslanders over the next decades. This is going to be the century of biotechnology and we must innovate or stagnate.

Any organisation or country—or, indeed, Australian state for that matter—not represented in San Diego for Bio 2001 is not seriously involved in biotechnology. Queensland is serious about being the Smart State and that is why I am leading the delegation of Queensland companies, universities, research institutions and government experts. It is a golden opportunity to expand our biotechnology industry, creating new jobs by finding new sources of the venture capital that we need to turn our research discoveries into commercial products, finding new partners and contacts to work with to develop our biotechnology industry, attracting more companies to establish businesses in Queensland, and publicising the megadiversity of the unique flora and fauna that we have available in Queensland. Biotechnology media will also be there in force among 284 journalists covering the conference and exhibition.

For the past two years I have been the only Australian Premier spearheading delegations. Victoria has woken up to the enormous potential offered by these conferences and Premier Bracks will be there this year along with the Victorian Treasurer, John Brumby.

Mr Lucas: They need two to match you.

Mr BEATTIE: I should say to the Minister for Innovation that he will be representing Queensland at next year's biotechnology conference. I am not sure about the matching bit. I will think about that.

Tomorrow evening in San Diego I will be hosting meetings with our North American biotechnology advisory group, which we started in 1999 as a market development, networking and mentoring group. It has done much to help us grow internationally. A four-hour reception on Saturday will be important in enabling our delegation and our American partners to establish relationships. I will be holding business meetings with various organisations on Sunday, including

Telenetix, a company at the forefront of the rapidly expanding market for advanced technology systems and services for higher education, and Brisbane-based company Accenture.

The conference and exhibition opens formally on Sunday evening with a reception, which gives us our first chance of mixing with biotechnology leaders from the rest of the world. Appointments on Monday include a tour of a high-tech high school in San Diego and an inspection of Scripps Institute of Oceanography, which I understand to be similar to the Australian Institute of Marine Science in Townsville. I will hold a media conference at Bio 2001 on Monday afternoon to spread the news as widely as possible about Queensland's capabilities, achievements and potential, including the announcement of a \$100 million fund, which I am not at liberty to discuss because it is a matter in the budget. However, I will mention it, anyway, in case there is an identical one in another budget at another time.

A plentiful source of venture capital is essential if we are to commercialise our biotechnological discoveries, so I will hold a venture capital round table meeting on Monday afternoon. I will then host Queensland's major reception for several hundred biotechnology delegates on Monday evening where we expect to initiate many valuable contacts for future partnerships and business.

While on the American continent I will visit neighbouring Mexico to hold trade talks with senior ministers, other government leaders and business leaders—talks that are designed to open new markets for our beef and minerals. Much of Tuesday will be spent travelling to Mexico City where, in the evening, I will meet with the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources, Victor Lichtinger. On Wednesday I have a series of meetings all day with the director-general of the Mexican Mining Chamber, the chief executive officer of the Federal Electricity Commission, the Agriculture and Livestock Commission, the Mexican mining industry, and the Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food, Javier Usabiaga. My Thursday meetings include the Mincom company established in Mexico City, the Minister for Trade, Dr Luis Ernesto Derbez, and an evening meeting with the Trade Commissioner. I will have a final meeting with the Mexican Mining Industry next Friday before returning to Queensland.

I table a copy of a Queensland government briefing on the biotechnology mission, which has gone to all delegates. I hope that all members will read that. I also table general government material for the visit as well. This conference is important for the future of Queensland's drive to become the Smart State. I hope it has the support of all members in this House.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Childers Backpackers Hostel Fire

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.41 a.m.), by leave: This Saturday marks the anniversary of the tragic Palace Backpackers Hostel fire at Childers in which 15 young people lost their lives. A memorial service will be held in Childers at 5.30 p.m. that day. The Minister for Local Government, Nita Cunningham, and the Minister for Emergency Services, Mike Reynolds, will be representing the government and, I would hope, all members of this parliament. Indeed, the local member will be present as well.

Again I pass on the condolences of the government, the parliament and the people of Queensland to all those people who lost family members and friends in that dreadful fire. I also pass on our thanks to all those who helped in the rescue and in the aftermath, and I send our best wishes to those still affected by trauma.

Since the tragedy, the Queensland government has been involved in extensive negotiations with the Isis Shire Council to arrange a suitable memorial to victims of the fire. The Queensland government has also set up a committee to keep the families of the victims informed on matters relating to court appearances, claims for assistance and progress concerning the memorial plans. As I have previously advised the parliament, I met with some family members in London during my visit there for the Centenary of Federation celebrations last year.

The fire at Childers had a profound effect not only on the families and friends of those who died in the fire but also on the 69 survivors and the people and town of Childers. They have really done themselves and this state proud by the way that they have conducted themselves.

Following the fire, the Isis Shire Council started negotiations with the then owner to purchase the hostel. Those negotiations were overtaken by an offer from P. J. Burns, a building firm from the north coast, which resulted in the company buying the hostel. In December 2000, when it was thought that restoration of the hostel and the building of a new hostel to the rear of the old hostel

would start, P. J. Burns made application to the Queensland government for a \$3 million loan with an interest-free period. This application was reviewed and, following further negotiations to find a suitable solution, including the possible purchase of the old hostel site by the Isis Shire Council, the application was rejected on commercial grounds.

For the past two months, the Isis Shire Council has been negotiating with P. J. Burns to purchase the site with the aim of restoring the hostel as a memorial using funding from the governments of Australia, the United Kingdom and Queensland. However, this proposal depends on receiving funding under the federal government's Regional Solutions Program. At the pre-COAG meeting dinner at the Lodge recently, I took a brief moment to give a personal letter to the Prime Minister in relation to this matter. This is above politics. We are endeavouring to work very closely with everyone.

An alternative memorial proposal has been put to the families and feedback is being obtained from them. I recently wrote to a number of the families. Approval in principle to obtain the old hostel and restore it as a memorial has also been sought from the families.

The Queensland government has provided significant support to the Childers community as a result of the tragedy. So far, the state has contributed \$150,000 and has identified a further \$90,000 for the restoration, should it proceed. In addition, the Queensland government hosted a number of the families who had lost loved ones when they visited Queensland in June and July last year. Representatives from the protocol section of my department worked very closely with them.

The position now is that we are waiting for the result of the application to the Regional Solutions Program and the negotiations between the Isis Shire Council and P. J. Burns. Recently I spoke to Mayor Bill Trevor when he was visiting Parliament House. I have assured him of our support and I am sure that this matter can be resolved.

The Childers fire also raised serious questions about Queensland's fire safety standards. A special task force looked at our laws and has made 12 recommendations that are now going through a consultation process with stakeholders and that are being considered in detail by cabinet. Following the Childers tragedy, the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority inspected all buildings offering backpacker and low-budget accommodation. They carried out 1,428 inspections and found that only 60 per cent of buildings were fitted with smoke alarms. Of those, only 50 per cent were operational. The inspections also revealed inadequate fire safety measures such as evacuation notices and poor maintenance of safety equipment. That is not a very good state of affairs.

The state government put in place immediate measures to increase fire safety awareness. We have established a new licensing regime that is enforced by the Building Services Authority to make sure that people who install fire safety systems are registered. This new system will be effective from 1 July. An independent panel has also formulated a regulatory impact statement to develop options for fire safety upgrades that are affordable, while ensuring that fire safety standards are met. These are subject to public consultation that concludes on 31 July. Multi-lingual fire safety brochures have been provided in all budget accommodation for guests as they check in, and similar brochures have been placed at Internet cafes used by backpackers and posted on popular Internet sites.

The Childers fire was a terrible tragedy that has touched the lives of hundreds of people in a very direct way and of all Queenslanders in a less direct but nevertheless moving way. Once again, on behalf of all Queenslanders, I extend our condolences to the families and friends of those who died in the Childers backpacker fire. Also, I pass on the admiration of all members of this parliament to the people of Childers and, particularly, the mayor and the council for the dignified way that they have handled this tragedy.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Mr A. Druery

Hon. A. M. BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Minister for Education) (9.47 a.m.), by leave: Over the past 45 years, many members of this House and members of the public will have had the pleasure of working with Mr Alan Druery during his time as a teacher and more recently as the executive director of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission. It is with regret that I inform the House that, after such a long period of dedication to quality education in Queensland, next

month Mr Druery will be retiring. As many members will know, Mr Druery has had a distinguished career committed to educating young people in the Catholic system.

Mr Horan: He taught me.

Ms BLIGH: There are indeed a number of members in this House who had the pleasure of being taught by Mr Druery.

Alan practised as a teacher for 14 years until 1970, when he became the executive officer for the Archdiocesan Education Council. He then moved to become the secretary of the Queensland Catholic Education Office and in 1983 rose to become its director. After five years he was elevated to chairman of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and in 1996 was made the executive director. It is from this position that Alan Druery will soon be retiring. I am sure that all members will join with me in expressing our thanks to him for his outstanding contribution to education in this state.

The Beattie government has always welcomed the involvement of all sectors of the community in the education of our young people. The role of the Catholic education sector is well documented in this regard. The qualities that have characterised Mr Druery's tenure have been strong advocacy, commitment to reform, generous and constructive debate, and a constant focus on what is best for our children.

On behalf of the government, I thank Mr Druery for the part he has played in securing the high regard in which our teachers are held, and for the standards to which our children are educated. He has shown exemplary leadership in achieving these outcomes in areas such as teacher registration, promoting collaboration with universities to secure the quality of teacher education, and in promoting accreditation and accountability for non-state schools.

Order of Australia, Fellow of the Australian Council for Educational Administration, Australian College of Education Queensland Chapter Medal, and a Queensland Premier's Millennium Award for Excellence—these are just some of the accolades he has received in his career. One of his most recent contributions was through his membership of the Webb committee of review into non-state schools' accreditation and accountability. As Minister for Education, I am personally grateful for Mr Druery's partnership in this portfolio.

Tonight at 7 p.m. the Director-General of Education and I are hosting a small reception in the annexe of Parliament House in honour of Mr Druery to thank him for his contribution to the Queensland community and to wish him well in his retirement. All members are invited to join me at this event to recognise Alan Druery's contribution.

Although Mr Druery will be missed by his many supporters in Catholic education, he has left Queensland's—and Australia's—education communities a permanent legacy of rigour and reform. On behalf of the Queensland government, it gives me great pleasure to pay tribute to Mr Alan Druery and wish him well in his retirement.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Migrant Work Experience Program

Hon. M. J. FOLEY (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Employment, Training and Youth and Minister for the Arts) (9.50 a.m.), by leave: Unemployed migrants face real challenges in finding work. This government takes every opportunity to create jobs and to make sure that those who are out of work are given a fair go in finding employment. For some, the already huge difficulty of getting a job is made that much harder by the fact that they have migrated to this country and speak English as a second language. The Beattie government has been working hard to ensure that the special difficulties faced by such people are understood and addressed.

I am proud to be able to say that migrant people have been, and are being, embraced in our jobs programs under the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiatives. Their needs are being specifically addressed in the Migrant Work Experience Program, a special project which provides training and work experience in government departments. As minister for the department with lead agency responsibility for this important initiative, I am especially pleased that we are demonstrating our commitment to creating a diverse work force through practical programs such as this.

While it is recognised that many people experience barriers in accessing employment, evidence suggests that people of non-English speaking backgrounds are the least successful equity group in getting Queensland public sector jobs, especially traineeships. It is only through

programs such as this that we will break the tyranny of unemployment for this deserving group of people. The Migrant Work Experience Program is designed to assist people of non-English speaking background gain vital Australian work experience. The research report entitled *Employment issues facing people of a non-English speaking background* found that job opportunities for migrants have been limited because of—

- English language problems;
- a lack of access to information on employment and training opportunities;
- unfamiliarity with Australian systems;
- lack of referees and relevant Australian work experience;
- vulnerability in the labour market, even when employed; and
- negative experiences in seeking employment, professional recognition and training.

This program is addressing all these barriers and recognises the strong links between securing sound employment and social, economic and emotional well-being.

I am able to inform the House today that the latest local program specifically aimed at migrant people is in the Cairns region. A grant of \$60,000 will provide 60 long-term unemployed migrants with a great opportunity to gain sustainable employment. The migrant access program is the third community employment assistance program coordinated by Centracare Cairns. Participants will develop knowledge of employer expectations in Australia, employment barriers and industry standards, and also gain skills in workplace communication. The Beattie government is committed to making our state one where everyone gets a fair go and where we can garner the benefits of a truly multicultural, modern society.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Meningococcal Disease

Hon. W. M. EDMOND (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister Assisting the Premier on Women's Policy) (9.53 a.m.), by leave: Winter and early spring are the peak times for meningococcal infection in Australia. So now is the time to be alert. It is extremely important that parents are aware of the symptoms and act quickly if they occur. Early medical attention can save lives. Meningococcal disease is an infection that predominantly affects very young children. However, it can also occur in older children and young adults. Although meningococcal disease is uncommon, it can be extremely serious and deaths can occur. So far this year there have been three deaths.

A Cairns mother, whose six year old daughter spent a week in hospital with meningococcal disease last month, is urging other parents to act quickly to save their children's lives. Mrs Fiona Harris is helping Queensland Health get this message out to all Queenslanders. Mrs Harris said that at first she thought her daughter had the flu because she had a fever, had been vomiting and had experienced aches and pains. But as soon as a rash appeared on her daughter's neck, she knew it was worse than the flu and she took her to the doctor. Within an hour and a half the purple coloured rash on her daughter's neck had spread.

When the doctor said the word 'meningococcal', Mrs Harris said she was scared. She knew the infection could take hold very fast because a friend of hers tragically lost a child to the disease. Mrs Harris' daughter was lucky. The local doctor started antibiotic treatment immediately and she was then transferred to the Cairns Hospital where she stayed for seven days receiving treatment. Now she is recovering at home.

It is very important for parents to heed Mrs Harris' advice and be aware of the symptoms of meningococcal disease. Early symptoms may include vomiting, high temperature, headache, a rash and discomfort when looking at bright lights. However, not all of these symptoms may appear at the same time. Younger children and babies may refuse feeds, be irritable, become difficult to wake or may develop a high-pitched, irritable cry. If these or any symptoms occur, people should seek medical advice immediately.

Mrs Harris' daughter is progressing well. Although she is still a little tired in the morning, she is getting much better. She is one of the lucky ones. So far this year there have been 33 cases of meningococcal disease in Queensland, compared with 22 cases during the same period last

year. Queensland Health sent information packs across the state to GPs last week. They contain symptom cards and pictures of the rash to help doctors to identify the disease. Meningococcal bacteria are passed by direct person-to-person contact. People are encouraged to practise good personal hygiene, including not sharing eating or drinking utensils. I urge all parents to heed this advice. It could save their children's lives.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Corrective Services, Aboriginal Art Program

Hon. T. McGRADY (Mount Isa—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister Assisting the Premier on the Carpentaria Minerals Province) (9.56 a.m.), by leave: I am pleased to inform the House that prisoners from the Palen Creek Correctional Centre participating in the Aboriginal art program have recently donated a range of artworks to the Beaudesert Hospital women's auxiliary. These items will be auctioned or raffled to raise funds for the children's ward, to go towards toys and activities. Prisoners undertaking programs of this nature can take pride in the fact that their efforts can help the community, and I believe that the Beaudesert community appreciates the donation from the prisoners.

As Minister for Corrective Services, I take a lot of pride in some of the fine artwork that is being produced in our state's correctional facilities. In fact, I have a range of beautiful Aboriginal artwork on the walls of my ministerial office. This painting that I am holding up is an example of some of the work.

Mr Cummins: It goes with your tie.

Mr McGRADY: It goes with my tie.

This work and many other examples of fine Aboriginal artwork will be on display at an art exhibition of prisoners' artwork to be held right here at Parliament House from 7 to 9 August. This exhibition has been organised by my ministerial staff and officers of the Department of Corrective Services. It will include not only Aboriginal artworks but also restored furniture and craft work by women in community correctional facilities. The production of this artwork allows prisoners to undertake a productive activity during their incarceration and also develops a sense of self-pride, which is a valuable step in their rehabilitation.

I would also like to inform the House of changes to departmental policy to clarify the sale and disposal of works of art created by prisoners. Under the new policy, works of art can only be handed out to members of the offender's immediate family; exhibited, sold or donated to an approved organisation; or retained by the offender. The intention is to prevent other offenders and staff from purchasing or dealing in works of art produced by prisoners.

Prisoners wanting to sell their artwork must follow a set process that requires a valuation, a contract or agreement, and indemnity or insurance against loss or damage. The disbursements of any sale of prisoners' art will include a commission to selling agents, and 20 per cent of the remaining proceeds will go to the department with the balance to be held in the prisoner's trust account. Money raised by the department will be used to purchase art materials to be used by prisoners.

This policy will create a clear and accountable system for the disposal of artwork produced within the prison system. Other innovative programs are also occurring at other prisons, such as Moreton Correctional Centre, where prisoners in the crisis support unit are making toys for needy children. The prisoners in this small unit are brought from other facilities to spend short amounts of time in this high-care environment. The crisis support unit prisoners trace the patterns for the toys, which are then cut and sewn at Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre. They are then sent back to the crisis support unit where prisoners stuff the toys and paint patterns on them, creating a variety of colourful stuffed toys.

A stock of these toys will be built up and delivered to the Salvation Army near Christmas time to deliver to needy children. Prison staff say that the program is also helpful to the prisoners themselves. Some of them can relate to the problems of needy children and are keen to do something positive to help them. Prisoners voluntarily take part in the program. The programs I have discussed today are just some of the innovative examples of the state's prisoner population contributing to the community during their rehabilitation. I will take the first offer now for the painting.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**Flight West Airlines**

Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER (Cook—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads) (10.00 a.m.), by leave: I rise this morning to update honourable members on air services as a result of the liquidation on Monday of Flight West Airlines. I can report to the House that significant progress has been made in relation to finding both an immediate solution for stranded passengers and also a longer-term solution. In the short term, Queensland Transport has been able to negotiate with operators to ensure that as many ticketed Flight West passengers as possible are provided with a service.

Eastland Air will immediately take up services between Brisbane, Toowoomba, St George, Cunnamulla and Thargomindah, and Brisbane, Charleville, Quilpie, Windorah, Birdsville, Bedourie, Boulia and Mount Isa. Sunstate has offered to take up routes between Brisbane, Roma and Charleville and Brisbane, Barcaldine, Blackall and Longreach. Queensland Transport and Sunstate are negotiating with CASA to approve Sunstate operating the additional ports of Blackall and Barcaldine on this run. This morning Macair confirmed with Queensland Transport that it will commence intermediate services between Townsville, Winton and Longreach tomorrow and between Townsville, Hughenden, Richmond, Julia Creek, Cloncurry and Mount Isa on Saturday.

Services between the northern peninsula area and Cairns will be reinstated on Friday—tomorrow—with Regional Pacific running a twin otter between Bamaga and Horn Island to link with the Sunstate Cairns-Horn Island services. All Flight West tickets along these routes will be honoured by these airlines. It is intended that these arrangements will continue until a permanent operator or operators are finalised. Schoolchildren trying to get home for the holidays have also been given a high priority. Most ticket holders will have seats on these interim services, and additional services have been added by Sunstate to Longreach. We will continue to monitor and provide assistance to these passengers as required.

As the Premier reported to the House yesterday, Queensland Transport has written to all interested operators requesting that they submit bids for contracted areas. Discussions have commenced with these companies and a new operator or operators are intended to be in place next week. Contrary to untrue claims made in the press yesterday, subsidies paid to Flight West to provide services have been reviewed annually. Since 1996-97 the subsidies have grown by almost \$425,000, or 12 per cent. Queensland Transport has also been negotiating with Australia Post to ensure that regional Queensland continues to receive essential mail services. Whilst mail deliveries are the responsibility of Australia Post, I have been told that additional road transport has been arranged where appropriate, and we are working with it to ensure that the interim operators pick up any outstanding mail. Australia Post will use the services which Queensland Transport is negotiating for a medium-term operator to deliver the mail over the next 12 months.

I congratulate and thank all those airlines that have picked up the additional services as a result of Flight West's demise. I also thank the officers of Queensland Transport, especially Allan Parsons and Gordon Buchanan, for their efforts. We will continue to work with these airlines to minimise disruption to the travelling public and associated services and to deliver certainty to operators and the community.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**Dingoes, Fraser Island**

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Minister for Environment) (10.06 a.m.), by leave: Following the tragic and fatal dingo attack on a nine year old boy on Fraser Island on 30 April 2001, the government ordered an assessment of the risk posed by dingoes to people on Fraser Island. The risk assessment, which I now table, was conducted by a variety of government officers, including government risk management and wildlife officers in conjunction with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service rangers and staff from Fraser Island. Three leading dingo experts—Dr Laurie Corbett from Environment Water and Land Sciences in the Northern Territory, Peter Flemming from New South Wales Agriculture and Lee Allan from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines in Queensland—were consulted for advice on future management options. The RSPCA, wildlife groups and other interested parties also provided input. Indigenous representatives are being consulted.

The most significant factor contributing to dingoes losing their fear and wariness of humans is that people, both residents and visitors to Fraser Island, have been encouraging dingoes into areas used by people. Fines and penalties for the feeding of dingoes will be substantially increased. On-the-spot fines for feeding dingoes will be increased from a minimum of \$50 to \$225. Maximum penalties for offences that are dealt with through court action will be doubled to \$3,000. The current public education and awareness programs will be reviewed and enhanced on a continual basis. Other options aimed at modifying human behaviour include restrictions on taking food to certain locations and restrictions on the times that people can visit some areas.

In addition to changing the behaviour and practices of people on the island, it is also necessary to encourage dingoes to avoid people. This will be done by non-lethal methods referred to as 'hazing'. Rangers are now using ratshot to deter dingoes from visitor areas. This has been endorsed by the RSPCA. Other methods will be investigated. However, any dingo that becomes aggressive and poses a risk to people will be destroyed. Additional measures will be taken, including fencing camp grounds, closing some camp grounds and limiting unrestricted beach camping. Four more rangers will be based on the island to focus mainly on dingo management and a senior conservation officer will be based at Maryborough.

Research on the population dynamics of the dingoes, including their natural food sources, on Fraser Island will commence shortly. A proposal for official food dumps or feeding stations for dingoes has been rejected on the basis that such feeding would artificially increase the island's dingo numbers and alter their natural behaviour. The risk assessment also suggested that limits on the numbers of visitors to Fraser Island should be considered by 31 December 2001. The government is not convinced of the benefits of this proposal. However, before a final decision is made on this recommendation there will be full consultation with island residents, tour operators, the Fraser Island Community Advisory Committee, native title claimants and the island's World Heritage Area Management Committee. To ensure enforcement of these dingo management measures, including the townships and freehold lands, appropriate local government powers need to be established in consultation with the relevant local governments.

At the time of the fatal attack, dingo management was being conducted along the lines of the draft dingo management strategy. This strategy will be adjusted to reflect the now confirmed risk posed to humans by dingoes. The strategy will also incorporate the new management options identified in the risk assessment. Assessment of risks and effectiveness of management strategies will need to be undertaken on a regular basis. This report may have implications for tourism on Fraser Island if it is sensationalised. The risk assessment identifies the underlying risk at sites across the island. This risk was clearly the risk at the time of the fatal incident at Waddy Point. Since that time, the government has taken a number of decisive steps to remove dingoes of concern, to instil fear into new animals exploring vacated sites, to increase enforcement of controls on food availability from people and to enhance public education and awareness. This can be expected to significantly reduce the level of risk that previously existed.

I feel that I can confidently reassure this House and the community generally, and the tourism industry in particular, that the decisive action taken by this government and private tourism business operators means that the risks related to dingoes are being managed. I believe that this is particularly true on or near closely managed sites such as Kingfisher Bay Resort and Village, which I single out for special mention because it is the only private property identified as having a similar risk level to Waddy Point at the time of the tragic incident. In other words, the risk level at Kingfisher Bay Resort would now be significantly less than at the time of the tragedy. I commend this report to the House.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Fire Ants

Hon. H. PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Primary Industries and Rural Communities) (10.10 a.m.), by leave: A comprehensive eradication plan for the red imported fire ants, which were first detected in Brisbane earlier this year, is being developed. A national consultative committee of chief plant health inspectors from the federal, state and territory agriculture departments is considering the eradication plan.

There is ongoing consultation between the federal government and state and territory governments regarding the cost-sharing arrangements to fund the eradication plan. Through this national consultative committee there has been a national cost-sharing arrangement to fund the initial phase of the response program, which ends on 30 June.

As a government we have been spending more than \$300,000 each month to undertake public awareness, surveillance and identification, to delimit infestations, to treat infestations in outlying areas and in public facilities and to undertake intensive targeted test treatments at Fishermans Island and in south-west Brisbane. In addition, we have sought the expertise of three US scientists who have experience in managing fire ant infestations in that country. I understand that these scientists have been impressed with our response and they have been keen to offer advice in framing the eradication strategy for Brisbane. The national consultative committee is considering that input.

According to the Department of Primary Industries, it has been suggested that aerial application of bait be considered as an option in open, unpopulated areas. But the fire ant infestation in Brisbane is primarily in residential areas, therefore requiring on-ground treatments, property to property, as has been the case in the initial phase of the campaign.

The national consultative committee was not in a position to finalise the eradication plan at its Tuesday meeting. While these national consultative committee discussions are ongoing, the cost-sharing arrangements for further phases of the eradication plan have not yet been secured. I can report to the House today that, with the cost-sharing agreement for the initial phase to expire on 30 June, the government has taken the initiative to put in place a reserve fund of \$2 million, on top of its ongoing commitment, to ensure that the response program continues uninterrupted. The purpose of this fund is to ensure there is no cease-fire in our war with the fire ant. That funding will aim to maintain the response activities until cost-sharing arrangements have been finalised between the federal government and the other states and territories.

Our aim has always been to repel this invader, and that continues to be the case. The fire ant is an exotic pest that breached the national quarantine barriers the federal government has responsibility to maintain. I understand that the national consultative committee has commissioned a report from the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics regarding the potential impacts of fire ants if the infestation is not treated and allowed to spread. I am advised that the ABARE report has not been finalised. The initial estimates of the impact of fire ants highlight what we as a government have been saying and, more importantly, it vindicates our actions.

We have had our best scientists and many more staff working on the fire ant response. A number of these scientists worked on our successful campaign to eradicate the papaya fruit fly from northern Queensland in the 1990s. The success of the papaya fruit fly campaign was based on strong support from the community, industry, the federal government and other states and territories. It is that same support that we will need if we are to claim victory over this invader.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Disaster Mitigation

Hon. M. F. REYNOLDS (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services and Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland) (10.14 a.m.), by leave: This week I had the pleasure of jointly announcing, with the Commonwealth, almost \$3.7 million in funding as part of the Natural Disaster Risk Management Studies Program. I am pleased to inform the parliament that Queensland local governments are the big winners from this announcement. The Beattie government has contributed more than \$1.2 million of the total \$3.7 million Queensland allocation. This funding will be used to fund 45 studies across the state.

What this significant contribution demonstrates is that the Beattie government is committed to assisting local governments with the important task of disaster mitigation. It is an unfortunate fact that natural disasters cost Queensland about \$300 million each year. Research into the causes and effects of natural disasters has consistently shown that for every \$1 spent on disaster mitigation at least \$3 is saved in economic and social recovery costs. And this does not include the impact these disasters have on people's lives.

As Emergency Services Minister I am proud to say that in Queensland we lead the rest of the country in disaster mitigation initiatives. The fact that Queensland's allocation for the funding announced this week represents approximately 58 per cent of the available Commonwealth funding is a tribute to this.

In recent times this commitment by the Beattie government has led to the establishment of a coordinated statewide disaster mitigation committee, chaired by my department and comprising 10 government departments as well as local governments. The role of this committee is to ensure

a coordinated approach to disaster mitigation and to ensure it is a key consideration for local government and state planning schemes.

Recently the Premier and I gave a solid commitment to provide \$4 million over three years to assist with the development of disaster mitigation plans, particularly in regional Queensland. The government is well aware of the need to plan for such events, but it is important that we look at more than just what happens in the event of a natural disaster.

There is still a lot that we do not know. This is where valuable research, such as that carried out by James Cook University's Centre for Disaster Studies, is critical. JCU, under the guidance of Dr David King, has established a record of excellence in Australia in disaster related research. Spanning the diverse fields of disaster awareness, response to hazards, immediate post-event studies of impact and psychological expertise in designing warning messages, the centre's work is invaluable to the department and to the community as a whole. Indeed, the Department of Emergency Services provides this centre with an allocation of \$10,000 annually to assist with this important research. Just two weeks ago I announced a special allocation of an additional \$10,000, boosting our contribution to \$20,000 for this year.

This is an excellent example of the partnership which exists between the government and the university in researching the social and economic impacts of disasters. This important research allows us to be prepared for when disaster strikes and allows the government to provide a rapid response in the wake of a natural disaster happening. It also allows us to minimise the impact on communities.

This week's announcement of joint state-Commonwealth funding represents a total commitment to risk management in Queensland of more than \$7.5 million, with the state contributing \$2.51 million, over the last three years. It also represents another step forward for Queensland in this very important area of research.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Industrial Relations

Hon. G. R. NUTTALL (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.18 a.m.), by leave: The Beattie Labor government is committed to ensuring a greater balance between work and family life for Queensland workers. That is why it gives me great pleasure to announce this morning the introduction of Labor's new work and family package for Queensland public sector employees. From 1 July, 170,000 public sector employees will have access to a package that includes six weeks paid adoption leave and one week paid leave for spouses at the time of the birth or adoption of a child.

A new entitlement of paid prenatal leave will enable pregnant employees, or the primary caregiver, up to one week's leave to attend medical appointments and interviews prior to the time of the birth or adoption of a child. Spouses also in the public sector will be entitled to up to one day's leave to attend those appointments. These employees will also be able to use their new pro rata long service leave entitlements after seven years, which came into effect on 3 June, for parental leave purposes. This new initiative demonstrates that we are not only delivering on our election commitments to Queenslanders; we are also leading by example. This new and improved work and family package builds upon the Beattie Labor government's existing paid maternity leave and carer's leave entitlements.

As one of the largest employers in the state, the Beattie Labor government's approach to working conditions is to reflect the changes that are occurring in the workplace and in our community. This government recognises that today's working environment must value people's family lives and responsibilities in a modern world, and that a better balance can indeed mean greater productivity and prosperity for employers. With nearly 55 per cent of dual income families and 45 per cent of sole parents in the work force caring for dependants, achieving this balance, of course, is critical.

The improvements also better reflect the changing structure of the work force. Women now comprise more than 45 per cent of the Queensland work force. They also account for one in every three casual jobs. These latest initiatives add to our efforts to create for our workers more flexible working arrangements such as banked time and time off in lieu, part-time work options, and half-pay long service leave arrangements.

To further our commitment in this area, this government is in the process of establishing a new work and family unit within the Department of Industrial Relations. Part of this unit's role will

be to help promote positive examples of family friendly initiatives in workplaces which benefit both employers and employees in both the public and private sectors. I look forward to updating members of the House on the progress of our work and family unit.

SITTING HOURS; ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. A. M. BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.21 a.m.), by leave, without notice, I move—

That notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing and Sessional Orders, the House will meet for the dispatch of business at 9.30 am tomorrow, on which day the routine of business shall be as follows—

9.30 am to 10.30 am—

- Prayers
- Messages from the Governor
- Matters of Privilege
- Speakers Statements
- Motions of Condolence
- Petitions
- Notification and tabling of papers by The Clerk
- Ministerial Papers
- Ministerial Statements
- Ministerial Notices of Motion
- Any other Government Business
- Personal Explanations
- Reports
- Question Time

10.30 am to Adjournment of the House—

Government Business

Motion agreed to.

Ms BLIGH: I advise honourable members that the House will sit this evening with a dinner break between 7 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. Government business will take precedence for the remainder of the day's sitting, except for a 30-minute adjournment debate.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Aus North Queensland University Games

Hon. K. R. LINGARD (Beaudesert—NPA) (10.22 a.m.): Over the next few weeks and months, Queensland will receive a feast of sporting events, including the Goodwill Games and the Veteran Games. But one event which has not received much publicity is the Aus North Queensland University Games, in which over 3,000 students from 14 Queensland universities will be competing. The games will be held in Townsville between 1 and 7 July, with the university games opening ceremony on Sunday, 1 July.

When we look at the future of sport in Queensland, any visitors have always been very impressed with our public school system, where students of excellence can receive quite good competition. But the one thing that is happening with our 16 and 17 year olds is that we do not have much for students to go on to. I have always believed that the future of sport in Queensland will be in our base training that can be provided by universities. We have seen it in America; we have seen the excellence that comes through the American universities, and I believe that this is something that we should certainly support.

At these particular games, 14 universities, including the Australian Catholic University in Queensland, the Central Queensland, Griffith, James Cook, Southern Cross and Bond universities, the University of New England, the University of Southern Queensland, QUT, the University of the Sunshine Coast, the University of Queensland, including its Gatton campus, and, for the first time, the Northern Territory University, will participate in these games in sports such as AFL, baseball, basketball, golf, hockey, netball, rowing, Rugby Union, soccer, softball, squash, tennis, touch football, volleyball and water polo.

We should note also that it is costing these students about \$800 or \$900 to go to Townsville to participate in these games. The games will provide a mechanism for students to go on to the Australian University Games, because there will be three sets of games: one which we call Aus North in Townsville; the Eastern Games in Sydney; and the Southern Games in Melbourne. Certainly, we wish all of these students the very best.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging, Prince Charles Hospital

Mr TERRY SULLIVAN (Stafford—ALP) (10.24 a.m.): All Queenslanders can be proud of the medical, nursing, allied health and support staff at the Prince Charles Hospital. The services provided at the Prince Charles Hospital are of world standard, and the research carried out on the Chermside site is recognised internationally. We can all be proud of the announcement this week of the partnership between the Queensland government, Queensland Health and GE Medical Systems to establish a centre of excellence for MRI—magnetic resonance imaging.

Let there be no doubt that this new MRI facility will be world class. There are only three others in the world, those being in the United States. The parliament should also recognise that Queensland Health and the Beattie government had already planned to set aside approximately \$3 million for a purpose-built building where new MRI equipment would be installed, but the partnership with GE will mean we will get much more for our money.

In discussion with colleagues yesterday, I used an automotive analogy: we were going to build a high-quality garage to house a new Holden Commodore. We are still going to build the same garage, but we are going to get a Rolls Royce at no extra cost to the Queensland taxpayers.

Each year GE spends hundreds of millions of dollars around the world on medical research, and it wants to get a return on its money. As a commercial enterprise, it obviously wants to maximise its profit. It looked around the world and chose Queensland, specifically the Prince Charles Hospital, to locate this fourth such MRI machine. It wanted the best medical staff to develop the applications for this technology.

We ought to recognise people like Dr Richard Slaughter, Dr Andre Roszkowski, Mark Butterworth—from the diagnostic imaging department—and Drs Greg Stafford, Paul Zimmerman, Scott Crawford, Chris Davis, together with Dr Michael Cleary, Cheryl Burns and all the medical, nursing, allied health and support staff at the Prince Charles Hospital who made Prince Charles the hospital of choice for GE. This is a smart move for the Smart State. It will mean jobs for Queenslanders and the best medical services for Queensland patients.

Fisheries Management; Kenilworth-Conondale School Bus Service

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (10.26 a.m.): In the lead-up to the introduction into parliament of the Fisheries (East Coast Trawl) Management Plan, the government relied on support from a range of groups, including the Queensland Seafood Industry Association, to justify the proposed legislation. Government members stated in this House that the Queensland Seafood Industry Association was a progressive and objective organisation and that the fisheries plan had been developed in close consultation with the association. However, I have been told by members of the fishing industry that the state government can no longer rely solely on the comments from the QSIA as being representative of the industry, and I understand that more than 700 fishermen have refused to renew their membership with the association.

I refer the Minister for Primary Industries and all honourable members to the petition I tabled in this House this morning of 2,112 people objecting to the new fisheries management legislation and calling for an independent inquiry into fishing management in Queensland. We are talking about hundreds of decent, hardworking Queensland families who are facing ruin because of Senator Hill's unreasonable and idealistic attitude to our environment. He is hell-bent on destroying the state's fishing industry irrespective of the hardship it causes. I know we are fighting an uphill battle against him, because I understand he has already warned the Queensland government that if it does not do what he wants in the Queensland legislation he will override it and introduce his own federal legislation. The arrogance of this man is breathtaking.

On behalf of the thousands of Queenslanders who support this protest and the retention of Queensland jobs, I urge the Premier and the Minister for Primary Industries to say enough is enough, draw a line in the sand and send Senator Hill a message that he will not forget. Sir Joh showed the federal politicians that Queensland will fight for what is right, and I say that it is time for the Queensland government to stand up to Senator Hill and tell him that we have had enough; he cannot control us.

On another matter, I also thank the Minister for Main Roads and Minister for Education for their support and intervention in keeping the Kenilworth to Conondale school bus service open. My constituents in the Mary Valley are greatly appreciative.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before calling the member for Redlands, I welcome to the public gallery students, parents and teachers of St Ignatius School in the electorate of Mount Coot-tha.

Anniversary of Philippine Independence

Mr ENGLISH (Redlands—ALP) (10.28 a.m.): On Sunday, 17 June, the honourable member for Cleveland, the honourable member for Capalaba and I attended a function to celebrate the 103rd anniversary of Philippine independence. This function was organised by AFFAIR—the Australian Filipino Families Association in Redlands. I would like to thank Diane Bitossi, the president of AFFAIR, and her executive for the invitation to join with the Filipino community in celebrating their independence.

During the function we witnessed a mini-play highlighting the Philippines' struggle for independence from Spain. We also witnessed the moving artistry and athleticism of the Nalinac Variety Dancers. The Nalinac dancers demonstrated a number of Philippine folk dances. My parliamentary colleagues and I were also invited to learn the Tinikling dance, which involves dancing over two pieces of bamboo being rhythmically struck together. Our performance could best be summed up with the phrase: we had better not give up our day jobs.

Flor Birkett and all the performers should be congratulated on their efforts. This function highlights what multiculturalism is all about: retaining pride in their ethnic background but acknowledging Australia as their home. To borrow an analogy from the member for Cleveland, the rose is a beautiful flower, and a garden of roses is a beautiful garden. However, a garden with a variety of roses, carnations, tulips, gladiolus and daisies is even more beautiful. Variety is to be embraced. Variety is the spice of life.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The time for private members' statements has expired.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Backpacker Hostels, Fire Safety

Mr HORAN (10.30 a.m.): In directing a question to the Honourable Minister for Emergency Services, I note the comments of the Premier earlier this morning about Childers. The opposition joins with him in respecting those families and the people of Childers for what they have been through and the way they have fought back. I ask the minister: on the eve of the anniversary of the tragic Childers backpacker hostel fire, I note the intention of the federal government to provide funding to develop a memorial to the 15 young lives lost. I also note the findings of the Queensland government-commissioned building fire safety task force, which recommended some \$230 million in fireproofing upgrades for hostels and boarding houses. I ask: in the interests of the valuable component of the backpacking sector to the Queensland tourism economy, estimated at \$1.8 billion a year, and particularly in the interests of saving lives, will the government provide assistance to struggling tourism operators to enable the appropriate fire safety measures to be implemented, and will the government provide stronger enforcement powers to fire officers to ensure that fire safety becomes a standard feature of all backpacker accommodation?

Mr REYNOLDS: As the honourable member would be aware, it was just two weeks ago that the Minister for Local Government and Planning and I issued the regulatory impact statement in regard to the report from the task force set up after the tragic Childers fire. That regulatory impact statement is now open for public consultation for a 50-day period. That ends on 31 July this year. Indeed, that report is a very significant one in regard to fire prevention, not only in the backpacker hostels that the member has asked about today but also in low-cost accommodation, some of which is used by people with disabilities.

The report outlined a number of alternative provisions. Over this next month we will be consulting particularly with low-cost accommodation providers and also the backpackers industry in Queensland. As a north Queenslander, I am very much aware of the impact on tourism that the backpackers industry has in my region and in the whole state. In discussions that I have had in Townsville with representatives of the backpacking industry, I have assured them that in examining the different options in that report—and the implementation costs range from about \$13 million to about \$230 million—we are looking for a balance between fire prevention, that is, ensuring that we have adequate fire prevention facilities in each of the areas of low-cost accommodation, and ensuring that we are not in any way mitigating against the tourism industry. That is an important balance. In looking at those—

Mr Horan: The enforcement powers of fire officers.

Mr REYNOLDS: Yes. In looking at those, one of the options that we will have—and I do this jointly with the Minister for Local Government and Planning—is to ensure that at both a local government and a QFRA level, whatever option we come up with, we have some enforcement or inspectorial power to be able to look at that as well. It is a balance that we require. Over the next week we will be having focus group meetings and consultation. Also, part of our considerations will be the inspectorial power that both the QFRA and local councils will have.

Tourism Industry, North Queensland

Mr HORAN: I refer the Honourable Minister for Tourism, Racing and Fair Trading to the recent visit to Cairns by the board of Tourism Queensland, during which middle-range and budget operators expressed their concern that marketing under the Tourism Tropical North Queensland brand was concentrated on the top end four to five-star market. I ask the minister: what is she doing to ensure that the marketing of Cairns as a tourism destination also benefits those approximately 100 middle to budget owner/operators who play such an important role in creating jobs in the Cairns area?

Mrs ROSE: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. Cairns, of course, is one of our premier destinations in Queensland. I have been aware of some of the problems that have been experienced in Cairns. There is a newly formed business tourism organisation exclusively representing Cairns-based operators. When I have been to Cairns, I have taken the opportunity to meet with a number of the tour operators, and I am aware of their concerns, and also with the local members, the member for Cairns, Desley Boyle, and Lesley Clark. A message that I have always tried to get across to tourism organisations across the state, particularly in areas like Cairns, the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast, is the need to have collaboration and unity, which are the keys to a successful tourism industry. I have echoed those sentiments, as I have said, right across the state. I will be up there again next week, and I am also meeting with them. I have, however, been impressed with the efforts that they have made, and I am keen to do all I can to ensure that we maintain and build on that foundation.

The strength currently enjoyed by tropical north Queensland's tourism industry is due to a collaborative approach to market development in consultation with Tourism Queensland. Tourism Queensland, of course, is very keen to work with them. They have had a few knocks in the north over the last 12 months with the withdrawal of Singapore Airlines and Garuda Airlines. Of course, aviation and international direct flights into Cairns are very important. TNQ—tropical north Queensland—is one of Australia's leading domestic and international destinations, so we are very keen to make sure that we work with them so that we maximise every opportunity that exists up there.

The fact that the board met in Cairns is recognition of the value of Cairns and tropical north Queensland to the tourism industry. A recent survey found that 67 per cent of Australians associated tropical north Queensland with Cairns. That high recognition rate, combined with the fact that, despite some global economic downturn and changes to airline routing, the visitor numbers to TNQ in fact increased last year clearly illustrates the collaborative approach that TNQ tourist organisations have with Tourism Queensland. It is paying off.

Fisheries (East Coast Trawl) Management Plan

Mr TERRY SULLIVAN: I refer the Premier to the ongoing failure of the federal government to accredit the Queensland government's Fisheries (East Coast Trawl) Management Plan, and I ask: how can the federal government maintain this position in the light of its financial position for the plan, and what effect is this intransigence on its part having on the implementation of the plan and Queensland's trawl fishing industry?

Mr BEATTIE: I thank the honourable member for Stafford for his question. I want to make the point that all we want to do is get this plan operational. We are sick of the politics; we are sick of the nonsense; we actually want to get this working. That is what our approach has been from the beginning. On 1 January 2001, the new management arrangements for Queensland's east coast trawl fishery commenced. So it has already started. The plan was the product of more than 12 months intensive negotiation by a stakeholder working group, which I convened and which included representatives from industry, the conservation movement and the state and federal governments. Everybody was involved. No-one had an excuse; everybody was involved.

Industry acceptance and commencement of the new management arrangements was assisted by a \$20 million east coast trawl structural adjustment scheme, which was funded equally by the state and Commonwealth governments. That is important: it was funded equally. The federal Environment Minister, Senator Hill, stated in correspondence to the Queensland government late last year that the management plan would be accredited if it delivered an industry that operated in an ecologically sustainable manner.

The Commonwealth government's agreement to make its \$10 million contribution to the structural adjustment scheme in December last year therefore suggested to Queensland that the Commonwealth was satisfied that the east coast trawl management plan was ecologically sustainable. Why else would you give \$10 million? I don't know about others, but I do not give money to anyone I do not agree with. It is a pretty strange world.

Mr Schwarten: You don't give anyone any money.

Mr BEATTIE: In fact, I do not give anyone any money; the minister is quite right, and he will get even less after that!

In terms of contribution, I do not give money to anyone—and nor does anyone else—unless I agree with the purpose of it. Yet the Commonwealth has still not accredited the plan. This is a clear breach of its commitments given previously to the Queensland government and it is not a position that the Commonwealth can sustain. Considerable uncertainty and anxiety exists within the fishing industry over the matter of the accreditation of the management plan. The Queensland Seafood Industry Association holds the view that accreditation is essential for the industry's certainty, and the Queensland government shares this view.

Ongoing uncertainty is having the effect of dampening the buying and selling of effort units in this fishery. The long-term success of the management plan and the ecological sustainability of the fishery is dependent upon the continued trading of effort units. That is what the federal government is undermining. There are also reports that because of the uncertainty generated by the failure of the Commonwealth to accredit the plan, some financial institutions are not as willing to lend money to fishers wishing to underpin and expand their businesses.

It is simply not acceptable for the Commonwealth government and the federal Environment Minister to continue to use the industry and its participants as pawns in the minister's effort to promote his green credentials to the southern states as part of the federal election campaign. I just say to Senator Hill that there are families out there who are battling to survive. I heard what the member for Nicklin had to say this morning. We share his concern about the future of these families and their future as fishers. I say to Senator Hill: let us think about people for a change instead of politics.

Kupai Omasker

Mr JOHNSON: Before I ask my question, this morning I would like to place on record the opposition's sincere appreciation and thanks to the Premier, to his Minister for State Development, Tom Barton, and also the Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads, Steve Bredhauer, for keeping the opposition fully briefed on the Flight West debacle and for the efforts that they have made to expedite services into western Queensland. I have asked the minister to furnish us later today with detail on the Thangool service. We appreciate that and I thank him for that.

My question is directed to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy. Can the minister explain why neither she nor the Premier have met with the kupai omasker project working party on traditional Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practices despite repeated formal and informal requests from the Torres Strait Islander working party on this matter?

Ms SPENCE: I am happy to answer this question. I guess most members of the House would be unaware of kupai omasker, to which the shadow minister referred. Kupai omasker is the traditional adoption practice of the Torres Strait Islander people. Basically, over history the Torres Strait Islander people regularly—and today they still continue to do this—give their babies to family members to look after. As I said, they have been doing this for a long time, but recently it has become an issue for them as their children are frequently asked to produce birth certificates at school or when they enter a sporting club and then they find out that they are in fact adopted but have not previously been told.

The Torres Strait Islander people certainly want this practice recognised by the government. It would be the first recognition of traditional law in this country, and I support that. The difficulty

with regulating this practice and legislating for it is that there is not a lot of agreement in the Torres Strait about the standardisation of this practice. The adoption practice varies from one part of the Torres Strait to another. So it is not a simple practice for us to regulate.

Over the past few years on many occasions I have met with the Torres Strait Islander people and talked about how they practise kupai omasker and found a divergence of thought on this matter. Over the past three years I have met with the working party—I cannot remember when the last occasion was—and given them my commitment on behalf of the Queensland government to pursue this issue. In fact, I have spoken to the Premier and to the Attorney-General about this. We believe that the best way of proceeding with the legalisation of kupai omasker would be to refer it to the Law Reform Commission for some further study. I know that at present the Attorney-General is in discussion with the Law Reform Commission about how they might best take up this very complicated and difficult issue.

I hope we can do that during this term of parliament. I look forward to the support of all members of the House in going through this process and solving this very difficult issue for the people of the Torres Strait. It is a worthwhile issue to pursue. I believe that Queenslanders would welcome hearing about these traditional adoption practices. In fact, it is unique in the world and it is something on which we will be working with the Torres Strait Islander people to put into effect.

Air Quality

Mr REEVES: My last question as a single man is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to the widely acknowledged need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, particularly those from motor vehicles. As the No. 1 ticket holder of the South East Busway, I have seen how it has reduced the number of cars on our roads. Can the Premier outline initiatives taken by the government to help make Queensland's air cleaner?

Mr BEATTIE: I certainly can do that. I wish the member well in his marriage on Saturday. We have all met Megan. She is a very intelligent person and usually has very good judgment! We wish him well. We will see him back here the next time parliament sits as a responsible, mature person who is under supervision and guidance.

I return to the No. 1 ticket holder's question. In March 2000, Q-Fleet appointed an environmental manager, believed to be the first for the industry in Australia, who is working closely with Q-Fleet's clients, industry and research institutions on several projects. The first is an LPG trial. This 12-month project is investigating the performance of LPG-powered cars and their suitability for wider use in the Queensland government fleet. From time to time Robert Schwarten briefs the cabinet—and will in the future—on their success. Ford has supplied six vehicles and BP is supplying all the LPG fuel. Q-Fleet has provided six conventional unleaded vehicles as well as unleaded fuel to enable comparisons to be made. Industry figures suggest that the LPG vehicles will produce 10 per cent less carbon dioxide, fewer smog-forming and air-toxic emissions and provide cost savings of up to 36 per cent compared with the equivalent unleaded models. That is not a bad indication of success.

The second is the Toyota Prius evaluation project, which I helped launch. In an industry first Q-Fleet has an agreement with Toyota Australia to give it access to Toyota's petrol-electric hybrid passenger car, the Prius. Several are already in the fleet. Information provided by the manufacturer indicates that the Prius uses approximately half the petrol of an equivalent conventional car on a typical city-drive cycle, while carbon dioxide emissions are reduced by 50 per cent. These are good environmental outcomes. Although the project has been running for only three months the fuel savings achieved to date are significant. User feedback has been positive.

The third project is the Honda Insight. Q-Fleet has purchased two Honda Insight hybrid technology vehicles. These have been operating for around two months and, while early results are encouraging, it is too early to forecast any eventual fleet use.

The fourth project involves ethanol. The Australian Greenhouse Office, under its greenhouse gas abatement program, has announced funding of \$8.8 million to BP for the upgrading of its Brisbane refinery at Bulwer Island for the blending, storage and delivery of petrol-ethanol fuel. Ethanol and ethanol-petrol blends have been tested extensively overseas and have demonstrated that emissions are reduced when compared with pure fossil fuel use. Q-Fleet has discussed with BP the possibility of a trial of an ethanol-petrol mix by making the fuel available at Q-Fleet's South Brisbane depot.

The benefit to the community from responsible management of the government motor vehicle fleet is twofold. The introduction of more environmentally efficient vehicles and fuels has a positive effect on human health and quality of life.

Police Computers

Mr QUINN: My question is directed to the Minister for Police. I refer to his predecessor's commitment last year to provide \$5 million from the department's information technology budget to replace 3,000 outdated desktop computers within the Police Service with modern Wintel PCs, and I ask: why has the Beattie government failed to monitor this commitment by delivering only a few hundred new computers since May and, therefore, jeopardising police efficiency? What does the minister think this failure to deliver says about the government's professed commitment to wanting to become the information technology capital of Australia?

Mr McGRADY: Whilst I am not in a position to discuss the good budget that was brought down by my colleague the Treasurer this week, I will say that a lot of nonsense has been spoken by people who should know better. I inherited a Police Service that is the envy of many people around this Commonwealth. There are many aspects of policing, and obviously technology is vitally important.

If one reads the documents that were tabled in the parliament a couple of days ago, one would see that a huge amount of money is being allocated. The bottom line is that in the recent budget, which I should not really be discussing, there is an 8.6 per cent increase in the moneys allocated to the Queensland Police Service.

Mr Quinn: The last budget you are talking about.

Mr McGRADY: I will answer the question. The important point to realise is that many demands are made on the Queensland Police Service. My job as Minister—and it was my predecessor's job, too—is to secure sufficient funding for the Police Service to operate. The decision as to how that money is allocated is really the responsibility of the Police Commissioner and the senior executives. Obviously, as the minister, I take a great deal of interest in that. We talk about the separation of powers. The Police Minister does not and should not get involved in the operational activities of the Queensland Police Service. Today I give a commitment in this parliament that I will do all in my power to get sufficient funds for the Queensland Police Service to operate.

As I said a moment ago, the operational decisions of the Queensland Police Service are a matter for the Commissioner of Police who, by the way, is doing an excellent job. I have 100 per cent confidence in him. I would venture to say that he is probably the best commissioner that this state has ever had. I have complete trust and confidence in him. That is an operational matter. I do all I can to get additional funds for the Queensland Police Service to operate. We have been successful, according to the document that was handed down. I take note of the question and I will certainly pass it on to the commissioner.

Training Schemes

Mr PEARCE: I refer the Minister for Employment and Training to the government's program for training young Queenslanders for future employment, and I ask: can the minister inform the House whether these training schemes are proving successful?

Mr FOLEY: These training schemes are producing the best in the world as evidenced by the fact that this week two central Queensland apprentices have won an international skills competition in the United States. I congratulate them. I know I speak for all members of the House in extending congratulations to them.

On Monday of this week, apprentice automobile mechanics Michael Aspinall from Middlemount and Owen How from Rockhampton took out the Ford AAA international student auto skills competition in Washington DC. Today they fly back to Brisbane and then home to Rockhampton, where I am sure they will receive a warm hero's welcome.

The Central Queensland Institute of TAFE students beat international teams and the clock to fix a deliberately disabled car, a Ford Focus, before any other international team. Besides winning the international section of the competition, they finished a close second overall from a field of 55 teams. Making their task more difficult was the fact that until travelling to America these two young Queenslanders had never seen a Ford Focus, let alone worked on one.

This win, against some of the best automobile apprentices in the world, is a reflection of the excellent training that Queensland apprentices are getting at TAFE and with their employers. It also highlights the world-class skill level within the Australian automotive industry. In particular, it highlights the great work being done by students and teachers at the Central Queensland Institute of TAFE, which I know is close to the heart of the honourable member for Fitzroy.

This government's \$2 billion Skilling Queensland—Jobs for the Future policy is ensuring TAFE institutes respond to the changing requirements of communities and industries. This win is evidence of the result of that policy.

Today's motor mechanics require excellent technical skills to diagnose and repair faults with vehicles that rely heavily on computers. Those students have proven that their skills in this area are indeed world class. This international competition was designed to draw attention to the need for automotive technicians to develop the sophisticated skills required to service today's advanced automotive technology industry.

This is the second year that TAFE Queensland has won this prestigious international competition. Last year, Northpoint Institute apprentices Kaz Harris and Matthew Lamperd won the international competition, which takes place on the lawns of the White House. I am sure honourable members will take pride in the fact that Queensland is leading the way in this area and that the quality of our training is being recognised around the world.

Interruption.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

Hon. J. Kirner

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the member for Callide, I welcome to the public gallery the former Premier of Victoria, Joan Kirner.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Resumed.

Condamine-Balonne WAMP

Mr SEENEY: I refer the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines to his promise at the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council to cap water extraction from the Darling River system by June. Will cabinet be given the opportunity to consider the socioeconomic report into the impacts of the Condamine-Balonne WAMP before it is asked to make a decision on the level of the cap?

Mr ROBERTSON: The simple answer to that question is yes. We are a matter of weeks away from determining the cap under the watercourse planning process. I notice that, as we get closer to that date, the interest by journals such as the *Queensland Country Life* has increased somewhat.

A government member: You can't stop reading it.

Mr ROBERTSON: I cannot help it. I think that *Queensland Country Life* is the journal of choice for any Natural Resources Minister. Indeed, it focuses clearly on the Premier on the front page.

Obviously there are a range of competing concerns in the whole Condamine-Balonne catchment. We are trying to balance those competing concerns. That is what the whole process is all about, but that is not helped by the member's friends from Canberra. I note in this week's *Queensland Country Life* that National Party Senator for Queensland Ron Boswell is calling on the Queensland government to implement forms of compensation should there be any reduction in water allocations as a result of the plan. I find that a bit curious, because the article states that high profile Queensland Senator Ron Boswell said compensation was a state issue.

That is strange because I recall just last week the Deputy Prime Minister and National Party leader giving \$40 million in compensation for water allocation to the Namoi irrigation scheme. Of course, where is the Namoi? It is in the Deputy Prime Minister's own electorate! That is \$40 million to claw back water in his own electorate. But what does Ron Boswell have to say? He says that it is not a federal issue; it is a state government issue. It is no wonder that he is so concerned about losing office to One Nation.

It gets more curious than that because under Ron Boswell's little comment, the journal quotes John Anderson. John Anderson agrees with Ron Boswell that compensation is a state issue. Therefore, it is okay for the Deputy Prime Minister to spend \$40 million in his own electorate but, when it comes to Queensland, it is a state issue.

The National Party has sold Queensland out yet again. There it is, in black and white in *Queensland Country Life*. Boswell and Anderson are selling Queensland out. The only government that cares about the bush is this Beattie government.

Queensland School Reader

Mr ENGLISH: I refer the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing to the work of the government printer, Goprint, and I ask: can he outline any recent initiatives by Goprint to preserve our state's history for future generations?

Mr SCHWARTEN: Thanks to this government, we still have Goprint. As a result of keeping Goprint, we have been able to preserve a unique piece of Queensland's heritage, the *Queensland School Reader*, which was first published in 1914 and was still used in schools up until the early 1970s. Had it not been for the preservation of Goprint and the cooperation of the former Minister for Education, now the Minister for Environment, and the current Minister for Education, Queenslanders would not be treated to the 2,000 copies that have run hot off the press over at Goprint and will be available for \$77 for this magnificent set. That of course includes John Howard's \$7 worth of GST that comes off the top. He could not even help himself there.

Of course, who will forget those wonderful stories that we all like to recall, or that some of us like to recall? There was *Buying a Cow*, Parts 1, 2 and 3. There was also *Ask the Rabbit*. Do honourable members remember that one? There was also *Sancho Panza as Judge*.

Government members: *Horatius Defends the Bridge*.

Mr SCHWARTEN: *Horatius Defends the Bridge*. Everybody here is revealing that they went to school between the years 1914 and 1970. The fact is that everybody has a story about our *Queensland School Reader*. I must draw attention to the preface in the Grade III Reader, which says—

Special attention has been given to the poetical pieces, many of which, if learned by heart, will prove a 'joy forever' to the diligent scholar.

I am one of those people. Who will ever forget the line out of *The Village Blacksmith*—

Under a spreading chestnut tree

The village smithy stands ...

Do honourable members remember *Where the Pelican Builds* by Mary Hannay Foott? It states—

The horses were ready, the rails were down,

But the riders lingered still—

I could go on with that as well.

I was indeed a diligent scholar. I urge honourable members to take advantage of this opportunity of buying a piece of Queensland's history that, thankfully, has been preserved because we have been able to preserve Goprint. This will be their last edition because the copyright rests in Britain and we are not sure whether or not we will be able to get another run. Two thousand sets of 11 are on the market at the moment for \$77. If honourable members really want to know about wolves, they must read the *Queensland School Reader*.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before calling the member for Nanango, I welcome to the public gallery students, parents and teachers of Watson Road State School in the electorate of Algeester.

Water Supply, Coominya

Mrs PRATT: I refer the Minister for Natural Resources to the long-awaited Coominya reticulated water supply, which has been mooted since the early sixties, and the fact that Coominya is only two kilometres from the largest waterhole in Queensland, the Wivenhoe Dam, and I ask: will the minister give an undertaking to the people of Coominya that they will have a treated water supply by the end of 2002 or, at the very least, an anticipated date before the end of this government's term in office?

Mr ROBERTSON: I am aware of the concerns of the people of Coominya. In fact, I have met with the Mayor of Esk and people associated with that project. In fact, it was a meeting organised

by my colleague the member for Ipswich West. I met with them recently and heard their concerns about the need to pipe water from Wivenhoe Dam into Coominya. That is a matter that the department is looking at. However, I cannot provide particular dates or confirm whether we are going to be able to actually do that.

As the member would be aware, the Wivenhoe Dam is a dam controlled by the South East Queensland Water Corporation. Essentially, those decisions are made by that corporation because we are only a minority shareholder—I think 20 per cent—in that water corporation. Those decisions are essentially made by the South East Queensland Water Corporation. However, we are prepared to listen to any reasonable proposal put forward by the Esk shire to meet the needs of Coominya.

Despite the proximity of Coominya to Wivenhoe Dam, when Wivenhoe Dam was first constructed no arrangements were put in place to service Coominya and indeed no contribution, as I understand it, was made by the shire to the construction of that dam. To now, if you like, retrospectively provide water from that particular dam into Coominya requires some consideration as to how funding for such a project can be provided. As I said, we will continue to meet with the Esk shire and, through the advocacy of the member for Ipswich West, who is very strong on these issues in looking after his electorate, I am sure that we will give as much consideration to it as possible.

Koala Month

Mr CUMMINS: I ask the Honourable Minister for Environment—and I thank him for sharing a bout of influenza with me and many other members—as next month, July, is Koala Month, what is being done to recognise this much loved, furry, cute, cuddly, adorable little creature?

Mr WELLS: I thank the honourable member for his question completely without notice and thoroughly improvised. I congratulate him on his dedication to koalas. As he says, Koala Month is coming up. There are a number of events with respect to Koala Month that I would like to draw to honourable members' attention.

Firstly, on 29 July we are going to conduct a community based koala survey. We want people to report sightings of koalas so that we know where the koalas are. If we know where they are, then we have a better chance of providing for them, ensuring—

Mr Horan: Up in the trees!

Mr WELLS: I thank the Honourable Leader of the Opposition who, on this issue at least, has got to first base. I look forward to him coming a little further with us.

If people see a koala on 29 July, they should dial 1300 264 625. There is a little mnemonic device attached to that. People can dial 1300-ANIMAL, correlating the letters on the telephone with the digits. That will help rescue koalas and plan for koala sustenance not just at the Daisy Hill koala centre and the Moggill koala hospital but everywhere.

Honourable members will be saddened to hear that each year approximately 400 koalas are either attacked by dogs or injured by motor vehicles. This important event on 29 July will help us to manage that situation to the benefit of the little teddies. On 27 July the Australian Koala Foundation is going to be having Save the Koala Day to heighten people's awareness of koalas, of this lovable little Australian icon.

Secondly, I would like to mention that the other day I launched the Koala Venture Program. It is a joint program between Pacific Coal and the University of Queensland. It is unique because it is a three-year longitudinal program. It has already been of assistance in previous years in the revegetation of those sites which have to be cleared for coalmining. It is important that when a site is revegetated it is done the right way. Previous studies have indicated that koalas are terribly in need of koala corridors, of vegetation corridors. If honourable members think that koalas live quietly in sleepy, happy families, they are wrong. That is not actually what DNA tests show. DNA tests show—Mr Speaker, I would love to tell you more about that, but I will have to tell you more later.

Time expired.

Barramundi Nodavirus

Mr ROWELL: We would love to hear more, too. I refer the Minister for Primary Industries to the concerns held by the Australian Barramundi Farmers Association and the Aquaculture Council

of Queensland regarding the serious threat that nodavirus presents to wild and farmed barramundi stocks, and I ask: can he confirm that his department's fish stocking policy allows the release of barramundi into Queensland waters that may be infected with nodavirus?

Mr PALASZCZUK: Quite simply put, the answer to the member's question is no.

Dingoes

Mr McNAMARA: I refer the Minister for Natural Resources and Minister for Mines to the study into dingo management on Fraser Island tabled earlier by the Minister for Environment, and I ask: can he inform the House of broader action being taken by the Beattie government to manage wild dogs, including dingoes and dingo hybrids, throughout Queensland?

Mr ROBERTSON: I thank the honourable member for Hervey Bay for his question, and a very important question it is, given recent media coverage. Wild dogs, including dingo hybrids and dingoes, are declared pest animals under the Rural Lands Protection Act. It is prohibited to introduce, sell or keep them and their numbers must be controlled. The government already has in place a strong policy framework to manage these animals, as well as a range of effective controls, including the wild dog barrier fence and programs to use bait with 1080 poison, trap and remove problem animals. My department is also in the process of finalising a draft management strategy for wild dogs in Queensland in consultation with the EPA, grazing industry bodies, the Queensland Wildlife Protection Society and the RSPCA. The draft Queensland Wild Dog Management Strategy is scheduled for endorsement by the Rural Lands Protection Board in July and will then be released for public consultation. It is expected that that public consultation period will take us up to about September this year.

There is a growing perception in the community that dingoes or, more accurately, wild dogs and dingo hybrids are becoming a problem in urban areas. Where wild dogs and humans come into contact, particularly in urban and near-urban areas, there are invariably impacts such as attacks on domestic livestock, poultry and household pets. My department has undertaken a preliminary study to review the nature of the problem and identify possible approaches to managing the problem. While dingoes are in the news again at the moment, there are misconceptions about who is responsible for controlling them. Land managers are responsible for the control of declared animals on their land. Local government is charged with primary responsibility for ensuring declared animals are controlled within their areas. My department provides expert assistance to land-holders and councils through public awareness programs and by helping councils develop and conduct controlled programs, such as 1080 baiting and trapping.

The 1080 baiting program is strictly supervised and subject to stringent conditions and safety precautions set out in a compulsory agreement. Land-holders must sign agreements accepting full liability for any misuse of those baits. They must also provide adequate warning and signage to alert the public that 1080 baiting is taking place in the area. As I said, Queensland already has in place a strong policy framework and effective control programs for wild dogs. Finalisation of the new Wild Dog Management Strategy will result in even more integrated and coordinated management of these animals in Queensland.

Road Funding, Gympie Electorate

Miss ELISA ROBERTS: I refer the Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads to the fact that the electorate of Gympie is struggling to maintain its roads to an acceptable and safe standard, and I ask: would he consider increasing the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme above the \$300,000 now available, which only allows for less than two kilometres of road upgrading per year?

Mr BREDHAUER: I am not entirely sure what the question is, but I will do my best to explain. Queensland has three kinds of roads—national highways, state-controlled roads and local government roads.

Mr Seeney: It is the black stuff with a white line up the middle.

Mr BREDHAUER: If you are lucky, you have the black stuff with a dividing line. The electorate of Cook does not have much of that, but it is getting more of it.

The funding responsibility for the national highways rests with the Commonwealth. For example, that part of the Bruce Highway located in the Gympie electorate is the responsibility of the Commonwealth. To be fair to the Commonwealth, it has funded some significant projects in

recent times. I recently travelled to the electorate of Gympie to open a new section of road. The Yandina-Cooroy section is currently being upgraded. A significant amount of work is happening in that region.

The state-controlled road network includes those roads mentioned in the budget brought down on Tuesday, and I am not at liberty to discuss those. Around October or November of this year the government will release the next annual Roads Implementation Program, which gives the five-year outline of what roads we intend to fund over that period, bearing in mind of course that the first two years are committed and the latter three years of the program are indicative in terms of their funding. The Roads Implementation Program is drawn together in consultation with all stakeholders, particularly local government and industry. We work to try to identify key priorities for the state-controlled road network. The state-controlled road network statewide is around about 35,000 kilometres.

About 80 per cent of the road network in Queensland, however, is local government road. The Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme was included in the budget brought down on Tuesday, and again I am not at liberty to discuss it. We allocated \$35.6 million for the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme, but I will not elaborate on that because it was contained in the budget brought down on Tuesday and is in a bill before the House. However, there is a subsidy arrangement available under that scheme. It is fifty-fifty; we go dollar for dollar with local councils to try to help them to address priority areas on local government roads. Obviously though, local governments have demands far in excess of the funds that are available.

The government also makes a very strong commitment to smaller councils in regional and rural areas to help them maintain employment in their work forces, and that commitment will continue. Within the context of the available funds, I would be happy for my department to work with the Cooloola Shire Council to make sure that we hit as many of the priority projects it has under the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme as we can whilst at the same time being fair in terms of the allocation to other local governments.

Queensland Families

Ms STONE: As a very proud member of Emily's List, I ask the Minister for Families and Queensland's convenor for Emily's List: can she tell the House how the publication *Queensland Families* helps strengthen Queensland's families and communities? Can the minister also advise the House how this publication has been received throughout the state?

Ms SPENCE: I thank the member for Springwood for her question and acknowledge her interest in strengthening Queensland families. I also value her contribution to my legislative committee. When talking about strengthening families, all members would welcome the initiatives announced this morning by the Minister for Industrial Relations of his department's Work and Family Task Force. In her question the member for Springwood referred to the publication *Queensland Families*, a Beattie government initiative. To date, the government has released two of these publications. The second edition went out earlier this year. We distributed that edition to 6,000 different agencies throughout the state. These included child-care centres, GPs, public hospitals, parenting classes, as well as a number of other agencies.

The publication is being very well received. We are about to release a third edition. In fact, it will go out throughout Queensland next week. We have produced a half a million copies, which is double the print run of the previous editions, mostly because schools have shown an enormous amount of interest in the publication. Schools have actually asked us for enough copies to send home with each child in the school. The department and educators have been surprised at how well children and their parents have received this publication.

Last year we undertook a statewide survey which told us that 85 per cent of families surveyed agreed that parents did their jobs best when they were well informed and supported. It also told us that 73 per cent of families surveyed agreed that most people did not know about the support services available to them, 84 per cent believed that the government should establish an information service where people could use a telephone or the Internet to obtain parenting information, and 75 per cent believed that the government should provide services to all families, not just those in crisis.

The publication *Queensland Families* does just that. It aims to educate both children and their parents. The third edition, which as I said will be distributed next week, has articles about children and bias and the reasons boys do not do ballet. It talks about disability in families. It talks about valuing the family and gives tips to parents on how to help their children make friends at

school. It talks about issues such as how to identify stress in teenagers. Besides this particular publication we also have a number of parenting tip sheets, which have proved to be very popular. I have to say that the teenage tip sheets are the most popular.

Electrical Safety

Mr LESTER: I note the quite justified expression of both alarm and worry by the Minister for Industrial Relations this week at Queensland's very serious electrical safety record, a situation directly under his control. I note that this record is by far the worst in Australia and that the majority of casualties occur in domestic situations. Will the minister immediately authorise a renewal of the successful initiative, implemented under the National-Liberal coalition and abolished under the Labor Party, of offering a rebate to electricity consumers for the installation of safety switches, devices that have proven to be 90 per cent effective in preventing death from electric shock?

Mr NUTTALL: I have two things to say in response to the honourable member's question. First, from 1992 onwards it has been compulsory for safety switches to be installed in homes.

Mr Seeney: New homes.

Mr NUTTALL: Sorry, new homes. That is right. My understanding and my advice from the department is that there are approximately 500,000 homes that do not have electrical safety switches fitted. With the advent of the rebate scheme, the owners of approximately 25,000 homes took up the offer to have electrical safety switches installed.

Now we are looking at putting out an impact statement to allow people to look at a range of options. I do not want to pre-empt what the impact statement might say, but I say to the honourable member that we are addressing that issue. It will be part of the impact statement.

I have also indicated to people that I intend to write to the 6,000 electrical contractors in the state and ask them to assist us with the safety program. We will encourage them when they service homes that do not have electrical safety switches to speak to the owners and encourage them to install electrical safety switches. When the impact statement is released I will ensure that my department fully briefs the honourable member.

Indigenous Communities, Alcohol Abuse

Mr MULHERIN: My question is directed to the Minister for Tourism and Racing and Minister for Fair Trading. The Beattie government is committed to improving the quality of life and opportunities for people living in remote indigenous communities. To achieve results we need to consider workable responses to social issues, including alcohol abuse in the communities. Can the minister inform the House of progress being made by the Liquor Licensing Division in this regard?

Mrs ROSE: I thank the member for the question. I was disappointed to hear some of the comments made a couple of weeks ago in the media by the Leader of the Liberal Party criticising our efforts to address some of the sly grogging problems in indigenous communities. What it did show me was his absolute lack of understanding about what is a very complex and difficult issue. The success of our program and our efforts to crack down on sly grogging should not be measured just by the number of prosecutions. The Liberal Leader was saying that because we did not have a whole lot of prosecutions after six months the program was a failure. I know that we have a way to go, but we have made significant progress.

Our liquor licensing officers—we now have five indigenous liquor licensing officers—have identified about 40 people who are suspected of being involved in the trade of sly grogging. These people's names have been given to the police and the police are keeping an eye on them.

Sly grogging is part of a very serious social problem which has to be addressed by a range of government agencies in conjunction with communities themselves. We have had a pilot program at Woorabinda, Palm Island, Yarrabah and Doomadgee. It has been very much a learning experience. I myself have visited five of the communities. One thing I did find out is that there is no single solution to the problems across all communities. Every community is different. Every community has different needs and different ways of trying to address the problem.

What we have been able to do—I have met with a number of the Aboriginal communities and with a number of the government agencies in Aboriginal communities—is raise an awareness

among all government agencies about the scope of the problem and about the potential strategies to deal with it. I know that the Department of Health has health workers now working with young schoolchildren in educative programs to try to educate young people about the dangers of alcohol abuse. For the first time I really believe that some of these issues really are being addressed. We have had a number of road blocks. We have also had a highly visible presence of liquor licensing officers and police at road blocks.

Time expired.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before calling the member for Nicklin, I note the presence in the public gallery of students, staff and parents of Glasshouse Mountains State School in the electorate of Glass House.

Poisons Information Hotline

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is directed to the Minister for Health. One of my constituents recently telephoned the government's poisons information hotline and waited more than five minutes for an answer, in what could have been a life-threatening situation. Will the minister authorise the monitoring of telephone calls to this important life-saving service to ensure that there is no waiting time and take appropriate action to ensure that this never happens again?

Mrs EDMOND: If the member gives me the detailed information, I will be happy to follow up what happened. It is usually a very good service. I often get very good feedback about the information provided to people right across Queensland. Whether there was another call happening at the same time I am not sure, but if the member gives me the information I will be happy to follow it up and reply.

Queensland Transport Customer Call Centre

Mr HAYWARD: Can the Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads advise what improvements have occurred at the Queensland Transport call centre?

Mr BREDHAUER: I am pleased to answer the question. I thank the honourable member for it. It would be fair to say that two years ago the Queensland Transport customer call centres were under a great deal of stress. Waiting times were too long and stress levels in the call centres were very high. In 1999-2000 the government allocated an additional \$1 million in the budget for call centres. Since the project implementation, service levels have improved significantly, with the best level of performance occurring in the month of July 2000.

One hundred per cent of customers had their calls answered in under three minutes, with an average wait time of only 15 seconds. Less than three per cent of customers were hanging up before they were answered. There was a 70 per cent reduction in complaint calls, as compared with December 1999. There were zero complaints regarding waiting times. The staff attrition rate is now six per cent—in May 1999 it was 44 per cent—compared with the industry benchmark of 20 per cent. Ninety-one per cent of staff now consider the call centre to be either a good place to work or a very good place to work.

I was enormously proud on Friday of last week when the Queensland Transport customer call centre was recognised at the Australian Teleservices Association 2001 state awards as a state finalist in the teleservice centre of the year's over 50 staff category. This result was a clear indication of the state government's commitment and support for improved service delivery in Queensland. The national judges looked for outcomes which were directly aligned with the organisation's objectives and which showed that customer expectations are understood.

Queensland Transport has one of the largest call centres in the Queensland public sector. The Queensland Transport call centre did not win the award that night, but making the finals placed it among the top three call centres in Australia. I think that is a great achievement. In addition to the efforts that have been made by the Queensland government, I want to place on record my appreciation of all the call centre staff, who have done a fantastic job over recent times under considerable duress. The nomination and being a finalist last Friday night was a great credit to every one of them.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Fouras): Order! The time for questions has expired.

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL
APPROPRIATION BILL**

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from 19 June (see p. 1546).

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.31 a.m.): The National Party has a real vision for Queensland. We have a vision that the unemployment rate in this state can go from being the worst in Australia to being the best in Australia. The National Party believes that Queensland, of all states in Australia, should be able to achieve this. With our natural resources, our sunshine, our innovative people and our enterprising youth, why can Queensland not have the best unemployment figures in Australia instead of the worst?

If there is one thing that stands out about this budget, it is its absolute failure to address the worst unemployment figures that exist in Australia. It is an absolute disgrace, and the Labor government should be ashamed that, after three years of financial management, all it can deliver to this state and to the young people of Queensland in particular are the worst unemployment figures in Australia.

From the outset when we returned to this parliament in opposition, I said that the Queensland National Party wanted to be a productive opposition that made positive comment and put forward ideas so that we can actually bring about some improvement in this state. I will be making some comment during this speech about the way in which the Queensland Nationals believe we should be addressing, attacking and fixing the unemployment figures in this state of Queensland.

This budget totally lacks vision. We feel like the Treasurer is sitting out there in his chair on the veranda waiting for something to happen. The same old tired remedies that have been used for the past two or three years, which have continued to deliver a declining employment position in this state, have been applied again—short-term, ad hoc, feel-good schemes that do something only for three or four months and deliver nothing at the end of the particular scheme. It is time for Queensland to have some real structure to its budget. It is time for Queensland to have some real vision to its budget—working towards something that is achievable, that is practical and will actually deliver the changes that we need region by region, town by town, city by city—so that we can address the unemployment problems and do what the National Party wants to do, that is, give hope and chance and opportunity to young Queenslanders.

The young people of our state deserve the best they can possibly have in education, training and skilling. They deserve, at the end of that, to have optimism and to be able to see that, in this state, there is a government in place that can actually create jobs—permanent jobs, interesting jobs, flexible jobs, a choice of jobs—the sort of position that should be available in Queensland when we take into account our geography, our sunshine, our range of climates, our natural resources, our mining interests, our agriculture, our tourism, our hospitality and our business and service opportunities. All of these should be directed through a visionary outlook in the budget, but that just does not exist in here. That is the great disappointment with this budget.

The government is obviously sitting back on a declining financial position waiting for the GST windfall that is going to come in this financial year and increase year after year from the next financial year. But there is no real effort to shape the state, to shape the capital works of this particular budget or to shape the direction that we are taking, other than the projects that surround the Smart State issue. I will get to that shortly, because we do support the Smart State. But the point I want to make about it is that that takes a substantial amount of time, and it will look after particular segments of the economy. But we have to look after those people who need semiskilled jobs, trade jobs, unskilled jobs and professional jobs. Not everybody can work in the smart economy, but the smart economy can make some contribution to some of these other sections of the economy about which I have spoken, and it can act as a help. But we have to look at a visionary framework. And that is what the National Party wants to push this government towards during the next two or three years in opposition.

I have commenced my remarks by speaking about the unemployment situation in Queensland, but I want to speak particularly about the basic finances of this state. I want to speak about the capital works of this state, which are so important in providing for employment, and I want to speak again in detail about employment in this state.

To get to some of the basic fundamentals of the budget—this is a new budget. This is a budget for the year 2001-02. One of the important things about a budget when it is brought down is to have a look at the government's performance for the past 12 months. This budget is not only

the new budget that we are looking at; it is a report card for the past 12 months. We should be looking at the financial performance, the financial control and the financial management, and what was the discipline, what was the control and what was the performance.

If we look first of all at spending—spending blew out by \$919 million to \$19.071 billion—a massive blow-out of \$919 million. How could that occur if we had strong, tight, accurate fiscal control department by department month by month? We should never have a blow-out of that amount. The government has tried to put a spin on it. It tried to talk about the HIH collapse as though that was a major contributor. But it was only a minor contributor. We have heard the Treasurer tell this parliament that it was going to cost the state about \$8 million per month over the next three years and then a lesser amount over the next couple of years after that—over the next five years, in other words. He has since told the parliament that it is not going to cost that much—probably about \$240 million over the next five years. But the HIH effects upon this state in terms of cash really have occurred only in the past three months since that collapse. So there is no point in trying to put that spin on the massive blow-out in spending that occurred. At the same time, revenue increased by only \$71 million to \$18.251 billion. So instead of the predicted \$29 million surplus—the operating surplus that was supposed to exist and which was predicted in the budget for 2000-01—we actually had an operating loss, a deficit of \$820 million.

But have a look at the real loss—what is called the fiscal loss—and add to that the loss that came through the capital accounts, and we get \$1,700 million, or \$1.7 billion. That is what is happening in Queensland. It is no wonder that, after all the years of Standard & Poor's saying that we had a AAA rating, it is suddenly starting to qualify that—and seriously qualify it—by talking about our weakening position. And unless this is arrested, that AAA rating will decline. The time has now come to arrest that decline. This state can no longer afford the continued deficits that are occurring.

I said I wanted to speak about capital works. Capital works have been described over and over again as an important cog in the job creation strategy of this state. If they are important, then the capital works budget should all be spent, and in this past financial year \$278 million was not spent. So in the oversight of the finances of this state, we had a blow-out in spending in the recurrent accounts of over \$900 million. In the oversight of what was actually being spent in the capital accounts of this state \$278 million was not spent. How many lost jobs that cannot be picked up later on did that represent? What has happened is that in the new financial year, on a budget-to-budget basis, capital works spending will be reduced. At the very time when we most need to create real jobs for contractors, subcontractors and tradespeople and all the services that supply the various goods to construction projects, capital works spending has been reduced on a budget-to-budget basis.

Earlier I spoke about the \$820 million operating loss that had occurred in the recurrent accounts, in the operating accounts. If that \$278 million of capital works had been spent, as it was supposed to have been, then there would have been an even greater operating loss of \$1,098 million. So what has happened—

Mr Mackenroth: That's not right.

Mr HORAN: No? What has happened is that the government has not spent the money that should have been spent on capital works.

Mr MACKENROTH: I rise to a point of order. I need to correct the Leader of the Opposition. That is not correct. Charges are brought to account under accrual accounting. If he is going to make a speech on fiscal matters, he should at least understand what he is talking about.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Mickel): There is no point of order.

Mr HORAN: Some \$278 million was not spent in an attempt to make the books look a lot better. How many jobs were lost in that process?

In the 2001-02 budget, there is a reduction in capital works spending. The reduction comes down, on a budget-to-budget basis, to \$5.115 billion. That is a 3.22 per cent drop. If we add into that the inflation that is occurring and the inflation that actually relates to much of this capital construction, on that budget-to-budget basis, in true terms we are looking at a six per cent reduction at a time when capital works spending is absolutely essential. This reduced spending will result in job losses.

Capital works spending is not being used as an effective tool in attacking the dreadful unemployment figures that we have. There is not enough targeting of capital works spending to implement capital works projects that also lead to jobs once they are completed.

On the issue of spending, on a budget-to-budget basis spending rises six per cent to \$19.237 billion. The increase in revenue in this current budget again is six per cent, to \$19.261 billion, and the previous figure was \$19.237 billion. Again, we are predicted to have an operating surplus of \$24 million. Only \$24 million with all that spending! Remember the result of this 2000-01 year—a \$29 million surplus was predicted, and that crashed to a \$820 million deficit.

GST revenue was up \$4.636 billion to \$5.198 billion, plus \$213 million of balancing assistance from the federal government. That is going to give, through those GST sources, a guaranteed minimum amount of \$5.411 billion—an increase of 5.6 per cent. Overall in revenue, we see this increase in GST. We see an increase in national competition payments—from \$85.9 million to \$134.6 million, an increase in national competition payments of some 56.7 per cent. Total Commonwealth payments amounted to \$9.3883 billion—an increase of 4.7 per cent.

It is interesting to look at other state revenues. Gambling tax and levies are predicted to fall. Payroll tax rose 6.1 per cent, and the Treasurer has spoken about reductions in the rate of payroll tax. In the last budget speech, 12 months ago, it was predicted to drop from 4.9 per cent to 4.8 per cent, and that is being delivered for the forthcoming 12 months, and there is a prediction of a further drop in another 12 months time from 4.8 per cent to 4.75 per cent. The National Party welcomes this drop in payroll tax. It is going in the right direction, but it is going in minuscule amounts. The collection of payroll tax rose by 6.1 per cent. The new arrangements in this budget for payroll tax will change the overall assessment system so that that decrease will actually be cost neutral.

If you actually want to have a look at it, say you have a payroll of \$1 million, where the threshold for payroll tax is \$850,000. On a \$1 million payroll, at 0.05 per cent, that amounts to \$10 a week—hardly enough to put on staff or buy equipment. So whilst we welcome the downward direction of payroll tax, I think we have to keep it in perspective. If we are about creating business investment—and business investment creates jobs—the payroll tax deductions have to be more realistic so that they do allow businesses to invest in equipment. Investment in business equipment is the measure of employment opportunities. People cannot work unless there is equipment to work with. You do not have a job unless there is a machine to drive or a piece of equipment to work with. If we can increase business investment in this state, that could be part of the plan and the vision to create more employment.

Whereas investment earnings have been down, they are predicted to rise 28 per cent in the forthcoming budget, and we see increased royalties coming particularly from the mining sector, mainly because of the lower Australian dollar, which has enabled the mining sector to increase its exports. But a warning should be sounded here, because the government has put out the message that it will review the royalty arrangements, and that is obviously with one thing in mind: to collect extra money from the mining sector. The mining sector of this state contributes at least 20 per cent of our exports. The mining sector of this state is one of the major exporters in Queensland. It provides the outside money that comes into Queensland to offset moneys that go out of our state on fuel prices and other imported goods.

The mining sector provides employment throughout regional Queensland, particularly in central and northern Queensland. The mining sector has gone through some of the toughest and hardest years, with some of the decline in the economies in South-East Asia meaning that contracts have had to be renegotiated. The mining industry itself has had to go through enormous amounts of restructuring to remain viable to keep its operations going. Now, just as it starts to turn the corner, we hear the government talking about a review and a new system, a new way of arranging how royalties are collected, obviously with a view to collecting more money. If there is one thing that will damage the mining industry at this point, as it comes out of a very difficult time, it is any more increases in the royalties or charges or the systems of royalty collection that are imposed upon it. The National Party wants to make a strong point about the importance of the mining industry to our state and its importance in providing jobs for Queenslanders, particularly young Queenslanders, families, tradespeople and people in regional Queensland.

I turn to a couple of comments that have been made in the financial media about the fundamentals and the fiscal responsibility—or irresponsibility—of this budget. This budget got off to a bad start, because on the very morning of the budget we saw the Treasurer come into this parliament and announce with two or three hours to go before budget time that there was going to be a change to the Charter of Social and Fiscal Responsibility. In the usual arrogant way that this government, with its dangerous majority, treats this parliament, instead of providing the parliament with plenty of time to look at the results of that change—to work out why it was being done, did it mean a lessening of accountability, did it mean a change to the way in which this

budget could be compared with other budgets—in an obvious attempt to do it at the last minute, it dropped it into the parliament with a couple of hours to spare before the budget was brought down.

That means that, instead of the budget conforming to the government's financial standards and the Australian Accounting Standards, it now conforms to only the one. The change in the presentation of the budget is part of the smoke and mirrors that makes it difficult to compare this budget with previous budgets. It is about dressing up the Charter of Social and Fiscal Responsibility and then at the last minute coming into this parliament and dropping the news that the Australian Accounting Standards were no longer going to be part of that charter of responsibility.

I have mentioned already the surplus that was predicted and the actual operating loss that was provided. When we look at the actual fiscal balance compared to the operating balance, we see that the position for this state becomes far more serious. I would like to refer to an article by Associate Professor in Economics and Finance at QUT, Marc Robinson. In that article he makes the following point—

Fiscal responsibility requires that the Budget should be balanced.

He states further—

This Budget is not fiscally responsible, despite what the Government is telling you.

He states further—

More precisely, it requires that it should be balanced on average over the economic cycle.

He goes on to state—

This Budget fails this test. How can that be, you might ask, given that the Government is projecting an operating surplus of \$24 million in 2001-02? The problem is two-fold. Firstly, the projected \$24 million surplus is misleading: the reality is an underlying deficit. Secondly, even if the \$24 million surplus figure were fair dinkum, it would not be large enough.

The \$24 million surplus is misleading because it is padded out by asset sales receipts transferred into the Budget by public enterprises. The surplus figure relates to government departments, and excludes government enterprises. On a consolidated basis (adding together both departments and public enterprises) the reality is an operating deficit of \$225 million in 2001-02.

How, specifically, will this transfer of funds occur? The Government will, during the year, receive substantial funds from the sale of the Brisbane Markets Corporation and the long-term lease of the Dalrymple Coal Terminal. This money will be transferred to the budget via special "dividend" payments. These special dividend payments are treated in accounting terms just like revenue and therefore "improve" the operating surplus. The Budget papers don't tell you the amount which the Government expects to raise. But it's pretty clear that, without these transfers, the Budget would have been in deficit to the tune of at least \$100 million.

So this article is really saying that the reality is that this budget's operating deficit is \$225 million, not the picture of the \$24 million surplus that the government is trying to paint.

I would like to turn to some other comment that has been made on the budget. I refer to the *Australian Economic Comment* by UBS Warburg. The headline is similar to the headline of the article by Associate Professor Robinson from QUT. In that article, Associate Professor Robinson referred to the budget as being irresponsible. This headline states, 'QLD budget—a deterioration', and no wonder Standard & Poor's has given a qualified warning to Queensland's AAA rating, which appears in today's paper. The *Australian Economic Comment* states—

The Queensland Government today handed down its budget for 2001/02, and by our figuring, there were few signs of fiscal discipline. The government has focused on the net operating surplus which is in surplus, rather than the more credible fiscal balance, which is not. There is also a significant expenses over-run in the 2000/01 budget year. On a more positive note, at least the budget position is forecast to improve over the out-years, although there must be some question mark over these projections given the slippage evident in 2000/01.

At that time we saw a predicted \$29 million surplus and we were delivered an \$820 million loss. The article goes on to state—

In the first instance (and like their Victorian counterparts), the Queensland Government starts off with a black mark for building a budget around a capital works program and then focusing on the fiscal measure of the budget bottom line (the net operating balance) that excludes the cost of those capital works. The reported operating balance of \$24 mn for 2001/02 compares with a fiscal deficit \$499 mn which rises to a surplus of \$86 mn by 2004/05 ...

Secondly, the more credible fiscal balance, reveals a substantial deterioration in the projected outcome for the current fiscal year 2000/01. The budget is expected to be in deficit by \$1.7bn—

which is the figure that I gave earlier in this speech—

... quite a turnaround from the \$100 mn deficit in 1999/00, and a deterioration of about \$1bn from this January's mid year review—

That is a deterioration of about \$1,000 million from this January's mid-year review. The article states further—

This in small part reflects the \$230mn costs associated with the HIH collapse—

as I said, that is over the next five years—

as well as about \$108 mn due to the transfer of assets from the State Government to a joint local entity. The sustained difference over the forecast years between the cash and accrual based fiscal measures is something we are still trying to figure out ...

The deterioration in the budget position for 2000/01 largely reflects a startling increase in expenses of 16% or \$1.8bn from the previous year (excluding the impact of HIH). Going forward, expenses are conservatively forecast to rise by 3.5% per year.

As I said, this budget has lots of smoke and mirrors, but the warning signs are there. The spending by this government has been greater than the income it receives. For example, this morning I referred to the operating costs of the budget and the operating loss of \$820 million, which is equivalent to someone with a take-home pay of about \$600 a week spending around \$633 a week. That cannot continue unless they are selling off some assets—selling off the car and getting a cheaper car, or selling off some machinery or equipment, or selling off the house and renting a place.

So it is no wonder that the unemployment rate in this state is in such a mess. We do not have the proper fiscal discipline, we do not have the control and management of finances, particularly the expenditure of this state, and we do not have the vision that I spoke earlier to do something about the unemployment level in this state.

We need to put a proper plan in place and develop a proper analysis of what is happening with unemployment in this state. Why is it the worst in Australia? Why is it slipping further and further from the Australian average so that it has reached the lowest point in a decade? We need an analysis of regions like the Burnett. We need an analysis of the young, the unskilled and the semi-skilled who are out of work. Then we need to come up with a plan to fix those problems on a local and a regional basis.

We need a plan that can be targeted at the particular capital works that will help all classes of people looking for work, such as skilled, semiskilled and unskilled workers. We need to focus on capital works that will drive small business, so that it can start to expand and employ people. Small business is the greatest provider of employment in the state. We need to focus on projects that will develop exports. We need to focus on projects that will help value adding. We must develop a plan that focuses on manufacturing, so that the people who want jobs in manufacturing areas can find them. Not everybody can work in the high-tech environment of the Smart State. Some people need to work in manufacturing. Some people need to drive equipment and machinery. Some people need to load and pack things. Some people need to do trades work. We have to look at the areas within Queensland where employment is bad and do something about it.

We need to look at the needs of young Queenslanders. We have to look at areas like hospitality, tourism, management and trades. This budget does not work towards that. It does not have the vision or the targets that will do something about unemployment. It simply puts on the same layers that the government put on last time and the time before that, which are just stopgap measures. No-one has sat down and tried to work out where to build irrigation dams. No-one has thought about what we should be doing for tourism and marketing so as to increase jobs in those areas. No-one has examined where to put roads and ports to allow business to run more efficiently, thus attracting more business to Queensland. Where is the plan to reduce business costs by a substantial amount so that business can use those savings to buy more equipment and employ more people, thereby actually doing something about unemployment?

The real and tragic failure of this budget is that it is not built on a well thought out plan. It is more of the same old thing. There is no vision, there is a reduction in capital works and there is nothing to make business investment confidence increase. There are just these simple and tired plans of the Labor Party which are designed to help with its publicity campaign but which at the end of day will have little practical effect. In fact, if anything, they will drive our unemployment figures further and further from the Australian average.

My shadow ministers will speak at some length about their portfolios. As Leader of the Opposition, I want to speak briefly about the Premier's Department. I make one point: considering the needs of the unemployed of this state, this is a time when there should have been and could have been every endeavour made to reduce any expense that could be considered unnecessary,

and that saving could be put towards the sorts of things that would have bettered the employment prospects of young Queenslanders. If we look at what the Premier's Department had in its budget last year and see what it has this year, we get a real idea of where the priorities of the government lie. The budgeted figure for 2000-01 was \$2,861 million. The budgeted figure for 2001-02 is \$3,324 million, that is, an increase of 11.6 per cent budget to budget at a time when revenue is expected, from memory, to go up by six per cent and when every dollar is needed to look after young Queenslanders and give them a chance to get a job.

To demonstrate again the arrogance of the government—whilst the Premier's Department allocation went up by 11.6 per cent, funding for the opposition went down by 26 per cent from \$2.37 million to \$1.8 million. When that was announced not long after the election, I made the point that the National Party would cop it on the chin, that we would accept it. We had not won the election and that was what we were given by the Premier, but again it demonstrates the arrogance of the government.

At the time, the Premier tried to gloss it over by saying that every electorate in the state would get a second electorate officer. Yes, that happened, and many of those electorates needed that badly. However, all the ministers' offices got another electorate officer, so it made no difference whether one was in government or in opposition as to whether or not allocation was made for a second electorate officer. We were told to pool our second electorate officer allocations and use that to make up any deficiencies in the staffing budget. That means that opposition members were expected to work in their electorates with half the staff that government members have in their electorates.

As I said, we copped this reduction on the chin. However, that saving should have contributed to some decent employment schemes for young Queenslanders. When one sees the largesse of almost 12 per cent that the Premier has provided to his own department budget to budget, it quite clearly stamps the government's modus operandi as arrogant. The government concentrates on making sure that it has the maximum amount of money for publicity, glossy brochures and everything else. However, the budget totally lacks any vision or plan to make the budget really deliver something for now, next year and the year after for young Queenslanders and unemployed Queenslanders. In fact, the Premier has put himself before the young people of Queensland.

My shadow ministers will speak on a number of items relating to their budgets. One of the things that is very distressing to Queenslanders is the way that rural and regional Queensland has been neglected in this budget. Comments have come from the far north of the state, from the mayors of Townsville and Cairns, who have made sincere complaints about the lack of funding and the lack of attention paid to that part of the state. Similar comments have been reported in the media from the Gold Coast.

One of the items that concerns us is local government, which is running on empty. Capital outlays for the once high-profile Department of Local Government have diminished from \$200.6 million to \$173 million. Grants to local authorities are going down to an estimated \$437 million from an actual of \$449 million last year.

The shadow minister for natural resources reports that, for the fourth consecutive year, the 2001-02 state budget, which was handed down in state parliament on Tuesday, contained no funding allocation to construct much-needed water storage facilities. If ever there was something that would have delivered jobs for young people, if ever there was something that was obvious in the targeted plan that we are suggesting, it is the water storage proposals which have been bandied around for the past four years but which have never actually come to fruition.

A decent water storage facility such as the Paradise dam in the Burnett or an increase in the height of the wall of the Walla weir, once completed, would have the immediate benefit of creating not only hundreds but probably thousands of jobs. Such proposals would create jobs for people involved in the field, in picking, planting and production areas; for people involved in the packing sheds; for people involved in the transport and export industries; for people involved in negotiating export deals and marketing products; for people involved in technology and genetic development within agricultural systems to produce new and better products; for people involved in light engineering and manufacturing; and for people involved in repairing, maintaining and selling machinery, equipment and the technology required for farming, packing and processing operations. That is so obvious to everybody and it would work so well, yet it is neglected year after year. That is one of the great disappointments for rural and regional Queensland.

The Queensland Police Service's capital works budget has again been reduced by \$4.4 million. We also saw a reduction in that budget last year. We saw a reduction in the budget for its equipment needs, which meant that it had fewer cars and equipment.

We have seen again that this budget divides Queensland school students into the city haves and the rural have-nots. This budget sees a reduction in capital works spending in rural and regional Queensland, with the concentration of money being spent in the south-east of the state. City and country children need to be treated fairly and to be treated equally.

The dairy farmers have missed out again. We have spoken about this issue for the past two years because of the deregulation of the dairy industry by the Labor government. At the last election the National Party proposed funds being made available to assist dairy farmers in the transitional stage. We also proposed bringing together the processors, the major corporate supermarkets and the dairy farmer groups to try to work out an increase in the price paid to farmers so that they could earn a decent living, a viable income.

As I mentioned previously, this budget certainly does show the huge increase in national competition payments flowing through to the government from some \$80 million to about \$140 million. The dairy farmers have been deregulated by the government, the government has received its financial reward in terms of increased financial payments through the national competition policy system, but this state government gave not one single dollar of assistance to the dairy industry.

The budget as it relates to the DPI is a most amazing story. Over the past three years 534 staff were sacked or displaced from the DPI. Look at this budget and look at all the stopgap, short-term schemes that have been put in place under the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle program. On the one hand we see 534 productive jobs—people such as stock inspectors out there in the field who give information and assistance, which helps increase the efficiency and the way that primary industry works as well as research people and others who work with the DPI—gone over three years. What do we have instead on the other side of the ledger? We have all these little schemes. The government has probably used the money that has been saved from trashing 534 jobs to actually put in place these artificial, short-term schemes on the other side of the ledger that leave so many people disappointed at their completion.

My shadow minister for northern development has said that north Queensland pays for Beattie's Brisbane blow-outs. So the major spending is occurring here in the centre of Brisbane. We all recognise that spending has to occur here in our capital city because all of us come here and use our capital city. But it has to be balanced with all the other decentralised cities of Queensland. We are the most decentralised state in Australia, and that is our strength. It needs to be balanced by spending money in the north of our state. As our shadow minister has pointed out, north Queensland is paying the price for the multimillion-dollar blow-outs on transport projects that are occurring at the southern end of our state.

Here is more from our shadow minister for environment and heritage about government underspending on national parks. He says that in the past year the government said it planned to spend an average \$5.50 a hectare on parks maintenance, but instead it spent just \$4.50 a hectare. It underspent the budget by some \$7 million, yet in this current budget it has the audacity to trumpet that it plans to spend about \$7 million in the coming year on visitor facilities, resource management, upgrading infrastructure and management systems. That is more smoke and mirrors—using unspent money from last year this year and announcing it as some sort of new initiative.

The shadow Attorney-General and shadow minister for justice has stated that the government has turned its back on the Townsville drug court. This was an initiative of the shadow minister, the member for Southern Downs. He alone in this parliament fought to have drug courts introduced into this state as a new initiative. Finally the government was dragged kicking and screaming to follow that suggestion. That suggestion has compassion and practicality built into it so that we can treat some of those people involved with drugs and get them off drugs. Often those involved with drugs are also involved in low-level crime. If we can get them off drugs, then they will not become involved in serious violent offences. Introducing drug courts will allow us to do something practical about the situation.

The Beattie Labor government again has turned its back on the people of Townsville by putting the promised drug court for that city on the backburner in order to fund budget black holes caused by the overrun of projects in the south-east of the state. It has also turned its back on the

Cairns drug court. Those are probably two areas of the state where it is important that we have that system put in place, and so it goes on.

My shadow minister for families has questioned why the forecast expenditure in the 2000-01 budget allocated for residential accommodation has not been spent. Again, we see all these things that have not been spent. As I said earlier in my speech, the capital works spending—almost \$300 million—has not been spent. That is probably one of the greatest examples of financial mismanagement.

Again, my shadow minister for health talks about the rehabilitation beds. There was an election promise of 50 drug rehabilitation places. During the election campaign, the Premier promised an extra 50 residential drug rehabilitation places to be based in Cairns, Townsville and Mackay, and yet they have not been delivered in the budget.

Even the union movement is disappointed with the Beattie government. Our shadow minister for emergency services, Ted Malone, has said that the union undertook a survey of members last year which identified that Queensland ambulance officers were suffering work-related stress as a result of overwork. As I recall, they also complained in that survey about the lack of equipment and resources. Nowhere in this budget is there a specific purpose amount to address these particular concerns.

My shadow minister, Mr Malone, said that \$1 million has been identified to cover emergency service equipment for the whole state. \$1 million would not go far when we consider the individual costs of the equipment identified within the budget. Our emergency services need personal protective equipment, such as overalls, boots, helmets, safety glasses for SES volunteers statewide, wet weather clothing to benefit 2,500 volunteers statewide, safety at height equipment for 180 SES groups, and new and replacement communications equipment for 49 SES groups throughout the state.

Finally, the shadow minister for health is calling on the Beattie government to account for staffing. Our shadow minister has asked the Minister for Health to explain how she is going to cut waiting lists in hospitals around the state when the increase in staff numbers is only one per cent. How is the minister going to promise the 500 student nurses when staff numbers are going up by only 120 across the state on the minister's own budget figures?

That is a snapshot of the smorgasbord of broken promises that demonstrate the dire consequences when the government lacks financial discipline, suffers such a budget overrun or deficit in the preceding year and suffers that shortfall in spending on capital when it comes to the actual delivery of the things that matter—the services.

I have been critical of some of the aspects of this budget, but I have also been positive in saying what the National Party would do. I have been positive in saying how the major issue of the state, the unemployment issue of the state, should be addressed. We want to be useful in this parliament and we want to put forward positive ideas. We think that a number of items in the budget were good, and I would like to give credit where it is due.

In particular, we support the \$100 million Smart State research facility fund. Great care will have to be taken when deciding how that money is used. I have no doubt that there will be lots of applications and calls for this money. It is an area in which equipment can very quickly get out of date. But it will take great care to try to select those sorts of projects which have good prospects, which have not only the intellectual capacity to develop but also a very strong probability of being able to turn that intellectual development and knowledge into new products, new technology and new inventions that actually go on to produce the employment opportunities and the business opportunities in this state. We should also consider the human side of this, because these technologies may give people a better quality of life, and in the health area that may be a new medicine or new treatment. That is also a very important aspect of the technology.

I again make the point that, whilst the opposition supports Smart State research, research of this kind takes time. However, people need jobs today. As part of this process there have to be projects that can soak up those employment needs in order to lift employment growth. At the moment Queensland has a nine per cent unemployment rate, but this budget's predicted average is eight per cent for the year. That means that in 12 months time the rate would have to have fallen to seven per cent to achieve the eight per cent average for the year. A two per cent employment growth and a two per cent labour market growth mean that there is no net increase in the actual improvement of the unemployment figures. We need to get that unemployment growth above two per cent. In order to achieve that it is important to get the right plan and to look at what is needed where.

I turn now to the Home Assist-Home Secure program for seniors and acknowledge that the opposition supports the improved QGAP integrated service delivery initiative and the \$16.6 million provided to commence the implementation of that program. Similarly, we endorse the airconditioning of 70 more schools and look forward to the Cooler Schools program moving progressively further south.

There is one issue that has to be mentioned again in debate on the budget, that is, Lang Park. The budget refers to Lang Park. It is time for the Treasurer to stand up and explain the mystery of Lang Park and what is happening. Where is the \$125 million and more that the government has to find this year coming from? We have heard the Premier say that no public money will be spent on this project, so where is the \$125 million coming from? If it is not public money, where is it coming from? When Queenslanders consider the unemployment rate and the urgent needs in their regions, they begin to shake their heads when they realise that the government is able to click its fingers and fund a project worth \$300 million but not fund other projects that have been waiting for funding for years and years. Members should bear in mind that \$110 million was spent on Lang Park in 1992-93 to build a brand-new grandstand. There is now an additional \$300 million for the redevelopment of Lang Park, yet other sections of the community have to wait for projects that would deliver jobs.

Earlier I mentioned the comments made by others around the state. Queensland Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief executive Andrew Craig said that the government, in spending this money, which is the people's money, should be spending it on major infrastructure initiatives and not on public service wage increases. We know that there need to be fair wage increases. As a former Health Minister, I know how hard nurses, doctors and other health workers work. However, we need to look at the percentage of the budget spent on infrastructure. I have repeatedly talked about this in this place. The QCCI went on to say that the government needs to make headway on the Townsville base load power station, improve cross-river links in Brisbane and make headway with the Toowoomba range second crossing. Federal money is required for that project, but it has been brought forward through negotiations. However, drive is needed from the state government in order for that second range crossing to occur.

The QCCI also said that the government needs to move on the visionary project to solve Brisbane's sewage disposal problem to alleviate the environmental damage to Moreton Bay and guarantee secure irrigation water to the Lockyer and the downs, which would provide an immediate \$300 million a year benefit without any further additions to the infrastructure that already exists in the Lockyer and the downs. It also said that the government should implement the water management priority of the Nathan dam and the Burnett catchment. There are other projects I could add to this list, including the Elliott Channel in the Bowen basin and the dam proposed for the Atherton Tableland.

In the few minutes I have left I want to get back to the part of the state that is very dear to my heart, the electorate of Toowoomba South. One of the difficulties as Leader of the Opposition, shadow Treasurer, shadow minister for trade and shadow minister for multicultural affairs is having enough time to give to the good people in my own electorate. I am pleased to see that some things have been provided for in this budget for my electorate. A new Toowoomba police station, for which I fought for a number of years, is finally going to become a reality. Some \$1.1 million was spent on that project in previous financial years. This financial year \$3.7 million will be spent on the project and the balance of just over \$5 million will be spent in the following year.

I appreciate the fact that in past years the government has endeavoured to create the opportunity for major redevelopment of the police station precinct, the old courthouse and the old post office, a redevelopment that would have created so many jobs and revitalised the CBD of Toowoomba. Those major projects did not come to fruition, but what did come to fruition is individual purchases of the old courthouse and post office. The new police station has now been given the go-ahead, and that is good news for Toowoomba. It is good to see that funds have been given to the TAFE college for the new horticultural section, which will be located very close to the entrance of the TAFE college, and the new administration facilities. It is also good to see \$1 million allocated for the new energy section of the hospital. In this budget funding has continued for the redevelopment of the Baillie Henderson Hospital, and that continues the plan I put in place as Health Minister when the coalition government constructed the new hospital in Toowoomba.

However, there is one issue of concern relating to the capital spending proposed in this budget for the Darling Downs, and that is the per capita average. The state average per capita

spending per head of population is about \$1,500 per head. In the Darling Downs region, that average spending is half of that, that is, just over \$750 per head. What is needed in this region is major capital infrastructure spending of the like that has occurred in other parts of the state. The Darling Downs region is not an area on the coast where major ports, railway lines and coal-loading terminals are built. It is not an area where major mines have been developed. Rather, it is an area that is based mostly on agriculture. For that reason, the capital spending on the recycled water pipeline is absolutely essential to the area.

One other aspect I want to mention in the time I have left relates to funding for the community hospice in Toowoomba. I and the other local members for the Toowoomba region—the member for Toowoomba North and the member for Cunningham—met with the Minister for Health to acquire funding of \$490,000 for the full operating costs of the hospice. The hospice will now become a reality. The hospice committee has been able to raise over \$1 million, and is raising further money towards equipment. It has been a huge effort in the current circumstances. However, the honorary voluntary committee of the hospice has to raise \$750,000 a year to contribute to the ongoing costs of the hospice, but it would be too difficult for the committee to continue to raise that amount each year. Therefore, we approached the minister for \$495,000 per year to help reach that target. At the recent community cabinet meeting held at Highfields, we were advised that we would get a \$300,000 annual payment.

There was great disappointment on the part of the hospice committee and many community leaders. I have spoken to both my colleagues from Toowoomba, and we intend to continue to work with, lobby and negotiate with the Health Minister in an endeavour to have that funding increased so the hospice can operate at full capacity to care for the dying. The hospice will care for people not only from Toowoomba but also from vast areas of south-western Queensland and probably the Burnett. It will enable people to die in comfort with their families close to them, whereas otherwise they may have to go away to a large hospital or be in a hospital environment. This project is very dear to my heart. I hope we can have some success in relation to it. I ask the Health Minister to give serious consideration to that matter when the three of us meet with her.

In conclusion, I reiterate what I said at the outset. The government had the opportunity to deliver a budget with vision. The National Party wants this state to have vision. The National Party wants this state to be a state for young people. We see young people as the hope of our state. We believe that we as leaders have a great responsibility to our young—to see that they are well educated and well cared for, that they grow up in a family environment, that they are safe, that they are able to have fun, that they are able to be well trained and, importantly, that they can see light at the end of the tunnel and approach their growing years with great enthusiasm. The key to that is jobs. It is up to the government of Queensland to provide young Queenslanders with that opportunity. This budget totally fails in the most important area of any state budget. It totally fails to provide Queenslanders with secure, permanent and interesting jobs.

Ms STRUTHERS (Algeria—ALP) (12.31 p.m.): To judge this budget, all of us as honourable members need to put ourselves in the shoes of our constituents, not simply in our 'party' shoes. The taxpaying public will be looking at the budget to see if the government has managed the books well and to see if essential services such as health, education and police have been well supported. Overall, they will be judging whether their hard-earned dollars have been well spent. In the shoes of my fellow taxpayers I can confidently give this budget a tick on all three areas. In my 'party' shoes I can also walk tall as a member of this Beattie Labor government, knowing that this budget is both fair and economically sound. Our government has continued to set the economic levers to keep us on track for ongoing economic growth throughout Queensland.

I therefore rise to support these appropriation bills and to congratulate the Treasurer, the Honourable Terry Mackenroth, on his first budget. I also commend members of the Cabinet Budget Review Committee for their part in delivering improved services and a solid foundation for economic growth in Queensland.

I have sat through a few budgets now and I sat through the budget reply from the Leader of the Opposition today. He has talked about vision. He has criticised us for not having vision. I am sure it is disappointing for him to see that his vision is not supported by his own team. This is the main game here today—the budget reply speech from the Leader of the Opposition. He has one colleague sitting next to him now. There were two or three of them alongside him five minutes ago. It is not good enough. If I were the leader of that team I would be very disappointed about my vision. I would be worried that if I did not even have my own team's support, then how could I expect the public of Queensland to give me their backing? The public of Queensland deserve a healthy democracy. They deserve a healthy opposition. Sadly, they do not have it.

Mr Wilson: Where are they?

Ms STRUTHERS: That is right. Where are they?

Mr Mackenroth interjected.

Ms STRUTHERS: That is right. In judging this budget I dug deep into past budget papers. I looked at the final years of the National Party, 1988 and 1989, to assess the progress that has been made in the past decade or so, predominantly a Labor era in Queensland politics. Guess what I found? It would come as no surprise to most of us that I found evidence of severe neglect.

Let us look at employment and training programs. In the appropriation for 1987-88—Joh's last stand as Premier—employment initiatives and promotion of training totalled a disgraceful \$2.17 million.

Mr Mickel: The worst in Australia.

Ms STRUTHERS: That is right, the worst in Australia. The level of TAFE funding and number of TAFE places available to people were the worst in Australia. The actual expended for that year was even lower, at \$1.8 million. I scanned the budget papers and saw that the allocation required for the 1988-89 year was blank. There was no money there at all!

In the pre-1989 era the Queensland National Party government was failing to train our young people and workforce for the rapidly changing global economy. The National Party government was failing to give people out of work a leg up into the workforce. Joh boasted about the number of cranes on the Brisbane skyline as a sign of progress, but he was doing little to enhance the brains and skills of our workforce. This was being left to the initiative of individuals and industries.

In comparison with the 1980s, in our 2000-01 budget employment initiatives total \$107 million, and vocational education, training and youth totals \$724.5 million. State government training and employment initiatives of this magnitude are an essential foundation for a strong and sustainable economy. One of the first actions of the Howard federal government was to rip \$1.2 billion from labour market programs. This is the sort of action we get from conservative governments. They talk about caring about young people and caring about jobs, but their actions do not match their rhetoric.

I do not raise this comparison with the 1980s simply to have a go at Joh and the National Party—it is a past era—but to draw attention to the fact that the National Party government was failing its own constituency—failing its own mates—and continues to do so. The conservatives, the so-called natural friends of business and the rural sector, were letting their mates down then and they continue to do so. This budget and the previous Labor budgets of the past decade demonstrate without doubt that Labor has been the champion of industry and the champion of the bush in Queensland. The Labor Party is a party and a government for all people, and will continue to be for a long time in Queensland.

I have proudly boasted that the Algester electorate is an economic hub of south-east Queensland. Industries in my area and around the state can draw on a highly skilled workforce because the training sector, including TAFE, has been well supported by Labor governments during the past decade. Young people in my area can look forward to school-to-work pathways, including vocational training in schools. It is our Labor government that has made a genuine attempt in this and previous budgets to create more apprenticeships and traineeships.

The Honourable Robert Swarten is committed to apprenticeships for young men and women in Q-Build, while the conservatives want to sell off Q-Build. He and other ministers are committed to jobs and apprenticeships for young indigenous people. The Department of Employment and Training, under the direction of the Honourable Matt Foley, is instigating innovative youth employment programs, programs for mature age people and the worker assistance program for workers displaced due to the closure of industries in regional and metropolitan centres. These are the sorts of programs Labor gives priority to.

The Algester electorate is generally well serviced, but I know from getting around my area that many locals have been calling for improvements to some of our schools, from basics such as new toilet blocks at Algester and Forest Lake to new computers and buildings; more police and less crime and graffiti; more job opportunities; quicker access to the QE II dental clinic; road improvements; and decisive action to fix the drug problem. These are the sorts of issues common in other parts of the state.

Although there is always more work to be done and more services needed, I can proudly report good news to my local residents. This budget secures the future for the new P-12 Calamvale Community College, with an initial allocation of \$16 million. The Forest Lake State

School will also receive \$1.226 million for a new double-storey general learning area block, and the new Forest Lake State High School is on track, with a \$12.331 million allocation. Locals will also be encouraged to know that funds have been allocated for the new Calamvale police station. On the health front, the QE II Public Dental Clinic will share in the additional \$5 million to reduce wait times for public dental services—

Mr Mickel interjected.

Ms STRUTHERS: It is a great TAFE facility in Browns Plains that the member for Logan has. I assure other members of that. There is also a replacement ambulance station to be built at Durack.

As members would know, the Algester electorate is not only a significant economic hub in south-east Queensland, it is also an important transport hub. While this activity keeps our area on the move, it also has the consequence of adding traffic congestion to our local area. This budget brings welcome news with the allocation of \$1.8 million to complete the asphalt resurfacing of Mount Lindesay Arterial Road between Compton Road and the Browns Plains interchange. I will also continue to work on constructive solutions to congestion and heavy vehicle use of local roads, with trouble spots being Forest Lake Boulevard, Johnson Road and Ritchie Road at Pallara.

Mr Mackenroth: The opposition are so interested in this parliament. There's not one of them left!

Ms STRUTHERS: That is right. I remind the Queensland public that there are hardly any bodies on the opposition side today during this budget reply debate. That is how much they care about the budget of this state and the vision for this state.

On the jobs front, the expansion of the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle jobs program and the launch of the new programs targeting mature-aged people will be a great benefit in my area. The suburbs of Calamvale and Parkinson in my electorate are growing rapidly. It is encouraging for me as the state member to know that service infrastructure is keeping pace with this population growth.

I want to pay tribute to the Calamvale Community College reference group members, including parents, local residents such as Bruce Burns, and Education Queensland staff—Sue Bremner, Neil McDonald, Keith Cordwell, Paul Kidston, Ken Walker and others—who have devoted a great deal of time and energy to design and plan for the new school. The foundation students, parents and staff will be very proud of their new school. Those who view private schools as being of a higher standard than public schools will need to rethink their position, particularly when they see the Calamvale Community College in action. I also want to commend Jan Kazakoff and staff of Algester State School for participating constructively.

Mr Mickel interjected.

Ms STRUTHERS: Yes, Jan is great. The member for Logan had her previously in his area. They are participating constructively in the development of their soon-to-be neighbour, the Calamvale Community College. The Algester school community, though, are worried that the emergence of a new state-of-the-art school in their local patch will render their school a poor cousin to the new kid on the block. This is a valid concern. Most members have done the loo tour of their schools. Algester has a block in a poor state of repair. Other problems with that school need attention. The Algester school community will need the support of Education Queensland to differentiate itself from its new neighbour and maintain its outstanding reputation for quality teaching and education.

When operational, the new Calamvale Police Station will increase the capacity of our community to clean up and prevent crime. Some interested locals, though, have sought my support to ensure that the new station secures its own additional policing resources; that it not be a case of robbing Peter—the Acacia Ridge Police Station—to pay Paul. I will continue to put these concerns forward to the Police Minister.

While on the crime-fighting front, I would like to give recognition to Noel Ryan and his Sunnybank Hills Neighbourhood Watch, Vyv Dance and the Forestdale Neighbourhood Watch, and the Parkinson and Acacia Ridge groups. These voluntary community groups are very effective in working with police to deal with crime, and importantly they help to build a strong local community spirit and camaraderie.

I am very proud to be the member for Algeester. I give my commitment that I will continue to push for a fair share of future budgets to make our local community even better and to ensure that our community continues to be an economic hub of south-east Queensland.

Mr BELL (Surfers Paradise—Ind) (12.43 p.m.): I am on record as saying in the past that a dull budget is a good budget. And having said that, perhaps the Honourable the Treasurer may forgive me for having dozed off a little during his budget speech on Tuesday. Indeed, I was prodded by some of my Labor friends over yonder calling my name to bring me back to reality. But I certainly had a quick look at the salient points that were of particular interest to me on the Gold Coast and I knew that I had the Treasurer's words in his printed speech to digest at leisure.

It would be churlish of me not to acknowledge the good things that are in the budget for the Gold Coast city and the area surrounding the electorate of Surfers Paradise—matters such as the MRI installation at the Gold Coast Hospital and the capital works to be continued there; the grant to Griffith University for its expansion on the Gold Coast; the Broadbeach-Nerang Road upgrade; the contribution towards the feasibility of the Gold Coast city transport plan; and the increase in police numbers. I deliberately omit the money for the convention centre because that is really just a reprovizion of moneys that were in last year's budget, as I understand it. I suppose that all of those items would be of use and benefit to the people of the electorate of Surfers Paradise.

However, I do note that there is nothing specific—no particular works that will actually be specific—to the electorate of Surfers Paradise. Perhaps some of the additional police numbers may be deployed there, but I would like to signal for the next budget some of the matters which may be appropriate for inclusion.

The highway system through central Surfers Paradise was the subject of a grant from the state government of \$18 million. It may be painful to have to point out that there are cost blow-outs and that the government will be asked very soon for an additional contribution, perhaps of the order of \$10 million.

I would like consideration to be given in the next budget to the prospect of a cruise port terminal off the Spit—not the one that has been suggested for the Broadwater at Southport but the one that was looked at some 10 years ago and given approval in principle by the Gold Coast City Council, that is, a cruise ship terminal at a jetty off the Spit. That would be a great generator of jobs on the Gold Coast, and it would certainly put the Gold Coast further on the tourist map as being Australia's premier tourist resort.

I would also like to see consideration given to a Supreme Court at Southport. There is a great need for one in that area, and it is something which would greatly enhance the city of the Gold Coast and assist the residents of the Surfers Paradise electorate.

I would like to see more than just the feasibility study for the city transportation plan. I would like to see some real funding go towards the implementation of at least the first stage. Something could be done very quickly on river transport. There are commercial operators ready to start. It would not cost very much. But some of the other aspects of the transportation plan certainly are necessary and could do with some more funding in the coming budgets.

I would like to see the police budget increased for the Gold Coast region, not just by police numbers—though they be important—but by an increase in the budget so that the existing resources could be better deployed. For example, there is a very great restriction on the overtime budget. That could be increased substantially so that existing police officers would be able to be deployed at the times and in the places needed. I would like to see provision made for a fresh police station at Ashmore, where crime is a matter of considerable concern. A petition relating to that was presented in this House in my first week here—not a petition collected by me but a petition collected by my political opponent in the by-election campaign.

Certainly the Main Roads Department would seek a special grant of funds for the \$5 million or so required to upgrade the worst intersection on the Gold Coast, which just happens to be in the Surfers Paradise electorate at the corner of Bundall Road and Ashmore Road. A grade separation has been on the list for years and years, but because of funding constraints it never makes the Main Roads Department's five-year plan.

I would certainly like to see the Gold Coast, which generates a great deal of grey water, being connected to the proposed pipeline to the Lockyer and the Darling Downs—a great project—but it would need a little more financial allocation to enable the Gold Coast to be connected. That would be very timely in the next budget, because the Gold Coast City Council is looking at creating a freshwater treatment works just south of Beenleigh, and that would be a very appropriate place—while that money is being expended—to take the water which is generated

there instead of moneys being appropriated from council towards other means of disposal. So I say to the Treasurer: I promise that I will not doze off next year if the Treasurer surprises me and includes some of these items in next year's budget.

Mr LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (12.50 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to speak in support of this budget. Let me say at the outset that it is ironic how different interpretations can be put on the same event or situation. The *Gold Coast Bulletin* ran its budget coverage under the banner headline 'Short Changed'. The *Courier-Mail*, on the other hand, ran its budget coverage under the headline 'Labor repays its heartland'. They cannot both be right. I certainly prefer the *Courier-Mail* headline and believe it is quite accurate—although, with 66 seats, the headline might just as accurately have said 'Labor repays Queensland'.

The 'Short Changed' headline could have been used often over the past 50 years but never was. For 50 years the Gold Coast was short-changed and neglected by its coalition representatives—the infamous six pack and others. There were rare exceptions to this continuous neglect, mainly brought about by the efforts of Merri Rose in Currumbin. This budget sets about redressing the neglect of the past 50 years, and of course, that cannot be done in one budget. But each Labor member on the Gold Coast is committed to working non-stop to ensure that Queensland's second largest city gets the attention and funding it deserves.

There are many positive aspects to this budget, and any member could wax lyrical for hours. In fact, one did. He was not quite lyrical, but he waxed for hours, anyway. I will not do that. However, I intend to highlight a few initiatives which impact directly on my electorate of Southport.

Health is a priority for the Beattie government, and the Gold Coast Hospital and health services generally are issues which greatly impact on Gold Coast residents, especially with its high percentage of ageing people. The Gold Coast Hospital will benefit by the purchase and installation of an MRI scanner at a cost in excess of \$2 million. This scanner will improve patient safety and provide quicker and more accurate diagnosis than traditional x-ray equipment. Last year, more than 120 patients had to travel, mainly by ambulance, to Brisbane for MRI scans. So this is a perfect example of the government's commitment to provide health services as close as possible to where people live.

An extra \$200,000 has been allocated towards improving ophthalmology services, including an additional four ophthalmological sessions a week at the Gold Coast Hospital. This will allow additional surgery for cataracts, corneal grafts, eye repair, correction and reconstruction. A further \$12.245 million will be spent as part of the \$54 million Gold Coast Hospital redevelopment project.

An extra \$50,000 will be provided to Mirikai for drug rehabilitation treatment, taking their current annual funding to \$375,000. This very worthy organisation is not located within the Southport electorate. However, Southport is not immune from the problems of drug abuse, and many of their patients come from my electorate.

\$30,000 will be provided to the Federation Clubhouse at Southport, operated by the Schizophrenia Fellowship, to employ a coordinator, and this will improve the independence and quality of life for people with a mental illness on the Gold Coast. The additional funding for Mirikai and the Schizophrenia Fellowship resulted from deputations to the minister at the Southport community cabinet held some months ago. This is further proof of the success of the community cabinet meetings, which was such a great innovation of the Beattie government—a government listening to the people.

In the area of sport, I am pleased to note that the Southport Gymnastics Club has been granted \$150,000 for extensions, which will allow them to conduct additional sports such as martial arts. More than \$30 million has been given to local authorities, sport and recreation groups since this program began in 1998.

In education, \$454,000 is provided for Keebra Park State School's renewal program and \$825,000 for phase 2 of the Southport State High School's renewal program. \$181,000 is provided for a two-space relocatable building for Southport State School, and \$13.2 million is set aside to purchase land for the expansion of Griffith University. That university will also benefit from the \$4.674 million for the Centre of Biomolecular Science. Griffith University can also be expected to take advantage of the \$100 million Smart State Research Facility Fund, which is designed to foster the development of technologies to fuel knowledge-rich industries such as biotechnology and advanced manufacturing.

In relation to transport, \$650,000 has been allocated to fund a feasibility study into the Gold Coast light rail project. This may open up tremendous opportunities for the region, and again it

meets an election commitment made to the people of the Gold Coast. The government's commitment to public transport on the Gold Coast continues with an allocation of \$5.15 million.

From the Main Roads budget there is \$2.8 million, which goes to the Gold Coast City Council as compensation for the demaining of the Gold Coast Highway from Southport to Coolangatta. Road widening, signage et cetera in the areas of Central Street, Olsen Avenue, Nerang Street, Queen Street, Musgrave Avenue and Minnic Street totals in excess of \$2 million. Also under the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme, the Beattie government will contribute \$25,000 to the local authority to provide pedestrian signals at the Ridgeway Avenue retirement home in Southport. Almost \$4 million has been allocated for the public housing capital works program in Southport, and the maintenance program exceeds \$2 million.

Although the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre is not proposed for Southport, it is a project that is of the utmost importance to the Gold Coast, and \$30 million, as part of a \$100 million commitment, has been recommitted to this project. Other initiatives which will benefit Southport but which are not exclusive to Southport include:

\$10 million boost in Legal Aid funding;

\$2 million to be shared by Queensland's six convention bureaus, one of which is on the Gold Coast;

\$656,000 will go to the Gold Coast Tourism Bureau;

\$2 million in continued funding for a Training Track Subsidy Scheme, which will benefit the Gold Coast Turf Club;

the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative will be funded to the extent of \$100 million, and that will assist in providing jobs and training opportunities for the residents of Southport;

\$726.4 million is provided for vocational education and training, including \$538.8 million for TAFE Queensland—and Southport has several TAFE campuses; and

300 extra police officers statewide will also benefit Southport and the Gold Coast.

It is interesting to note, especially in the light of the *Courier-Mail* headline of 'Labor repays its heartland', that almost \$3 billion—or 58 per cent—of the capital works budget is to be spent outside Brisbane. Places such as the Gold Coast must be the heartland they have been referring to!

In summary, this budget is good for the people of Queensland, it is good for the people of the Gold Coast and it is particularly good for the people of Southport. I commend the budget to the House.

Sitting suspended from 12.58 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.

Mr JOHNSON (Gregory—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.30 p.m.): I rise to speak to the Appropriation Bill 2001. At the outset, I express some concern about some issues relating to the economic management in this state. I am certainly not pointing the bone at the Treasurer. I think the Treasurer and I probably share a lot of common ground, because I think that we probably went to a similar university! While he probably has some diplomas in different areas from me, I still think that the type of university that we went to is in a lot of ways better than some of the other ones that some people here have been to.

Dr Watson: Hey! Hey!

Mr JOHNSON: The honourable member for Moggill interjects. If he would like to come back into the chamber, I could follow that through further with him. However, I think he understands what I am saying.

I congratulate the Treasurer on the delivery of his first budget. I really think that his success and his elevation to this position is something that he should be truly proud of. I know people in this world applaud and salute people like the Treasurer who have achieved such high goals. I commend him for that.

I believe the centrepiece of this budget is the \$100 million Smart State research fund to provide grants for the high technology research that has the potential to deliver long-term job growth. I believe that governments must remember their charter and their responsibilities. There are times—and we saw such an occasion last night in this House when the amendment to the prostitution legislation, moved by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Toowoomba South, was debated—when we are in government that we think the opposition is always wrong, and when we are in opposition we think that the government is always wrong. But I have to say

that I do not think that way at all. As I said last night, 72 per cent of the legislation that is introduced into this House is supported by both sides.

I think the real issue is the people whom we represent. Mr Deputy Speaker, before we entered the chamber you and I spoke about the Flight West debacle. It is not so much what has happened to that company but what has happened to the people who are involved in that company—the 450 personnel, and wonderful people they are—that matters. They are now left on the scrap heap wondering about their futures. The people involved are professional people—flight engineers, flight stewards, clerical staff, airport and baggage handlers. Whether we like it or not, those people are professionals in their chosen careers.

I believe that the government's new strategy, the \$100 million Smart State research fund, is about making absolutely certain that we identify with people from all walks of life, not just those who are able to take up a university degree and undertake an academic career, because we need each other. The Premier's much-vaunted jobs, jobs, jobs catchcry during the 1998 state election campaign and his five per cent jobless target is now conceded by the government as being unattainable. This is not totally what the government is trying to achieve; I believe what we should be trying to do is make absolutely certain that the policies of the government—and that means the Labor government in this instance—is not only encouraging that employment growth but at the same time setting that employment growth in granite for the long-term benefit. That is what we are about. However, an unemployment rate of nine per cent is almost double the five per cent that the Premier promised. As described by Alan Wood in the *Australian* on Wednesday, the Premier has never looked like hitting that distinctly unsmart five per cent unemployment rate. That is not something that any of us can be proud of. I think everybody in this House and everybody in this state certainly wants to see the government achieve that five per cent unemployment target.

I have always said that if we are not reaching that goal of five per cent, we should look at other avenues. Where are our policies wrong? I believe that, no matter what we do—whether we are in business or whether we are in government—we have to look at the bottom line, and here the bottom line is about sustainable growth and sustainable jobs and ultimately a better quality of life for our people.

In this budget this government has established the hallmark of Labor governments, a budget deficit. That is an achievement that has characterised Labor governments in this country, which is still paying for 13 years of federal Labor rule. I am not saying that in relation to this state, but certainly that occurred in the federal sphere. The government has given the people of Queensland an \$820 million operating deficit. The government has to realise that business does not run that way.

Lately, the people of Queensland have been seeing a lot of the Deputy Premier. In addition to being Mr Beattie's fall guy for the five per cent job, jobs, jobs debacle, recently he has assured the people of Queensland that there is nothing dodgy or underhand in relation to the call-in on the Lang Park development. I will put it on the record now that I am totally in support of the Lang Park redevelopment. At the same time, this is about making absolutely certain that we do it right—that the government does it right and that the people of Queensland will be the beneficiaries of it. As I said in this chamber last night during the debate on the motion, Lang Park is going to be a fantastic thing, but at the end of the day it is the interfacing of infrastructure—whether it is road, rail or other infrastructure—that is important. All of those things cost money. My old man always said, 'The truth will keep you free,' and if there is an issue there that the people should know about, we should tell them.

The delusions of the government's bargain basement, no frills—and certainly no thrills—budget do not end there. Three weeks ago the Premier claimed that Queensland would remain the lowest taxed state in Australia. The facts are that Tasmania has a lower tax rate than Queensland's. The Treasurer has been in action on this one, too. He has stated that Queensland still has the most competitive tax system. The truth is that the last time Queensland had the lowest per capita taxes in Australia was when the coalition was in power in 1998.

The Labor government claims that we have the highest unemployment rate in Australia because Queensland has the highest job participation rate in the country. I do not deny that, either. We have a lot of seasonal workers who come here in the winter months. All of us are well aware of that. However, Western Australia has the highest job participation rate in Australia, which is 1.8 per cent higher than the rate in Queensland.

I want to have a closer look at the Smart State. The government has committed \$100 million of Queensland taxpayers' money to these initiatives. The \$100 million Smart State research fund

has been set up to hand out grants for high technology research with the potential to deliver long-term job growth. We are told in the budget that this money will be put into a one-off research facility fund that scientists from industry, universities and other research centres can tap into to finance equipment and facilities. At first blush, the concept of such an initiative seems to be a good one—another flashy label, one might say, a Smart State promising the latest and greatest that the world of science has to offer. I know that we have that in Queensland. I will touch on that in a moment.

However, fundamental issues regarding management and accountability need to be resolved before these moneys are handed out. One hundred million dollars is not a small amount of public money. Even the federal government is falling down on the job, because we are losing science and technology expertise which is going offshore. Governments of all persuasions are not locking it in. They are not giving our scientists and other experts opportunities within this country. The Queensland government will have to look closely at that.

The Premier has stated that applications to the fund will be vetted by an expert committee. Who will be on that expert committee? I hope it will be people from the broader section of life who will understand how this function will work. The program will be very progressive if the right people implement it.

Even more interesting is the Premier's statement that there is no risk in the fund. He says that it is infrastructure for the mind. There is no doubt that it is infrastructure for the mind. While there is no question that knowledge-based industries will play a significant part in Queensland's future economic development, the opposition is concerned about this government's record on infrastructure project administration.

What benchmarking processes will the government have in place to ensure that the people of Queensland will get value from that \$100 million? It is very important that there is a mechanism to make absolutely certain that that happens. The point I am seeking to emphasise is that the administration of this fund is just as important as the fund itself, but there does not appear to be any provision for this. On Wednesday the Premier was reported in the higher education supplement of the *Australian* as saying—

It may well be that after 20 years we may end up with a couple of hundred million and we might get it back.

Let us hope that we do get it back. Indeed, at the end of the day we have to get back more than that. We have to ensure that the creation of this project will sustain jobs in the long-term. This does not provide the people of Queensland with much comfort that the government will ensure that the \$100 million investment will pay dividends.

Consistent with the government's inability to manage significant projects, the state budget presented by the Treasurer on Tuesday reveals massive blow-outs in a number of major transport infrastructure projects. The inner northern busway was originally a \$76 million project; it is now \$135 million. It has blown out by \$59 million. The South East Transit Project is now \$599 million, which is up an astronomical \$206 million from \$392.6 million last year.

A week or so ago in the *Courier-Mail*, I was done over—as the former Minister for Transport—for the blow-out in the cost of the Pacific Motorway. We made it absolutely clear why we injected extra funds into the Pacific Motorway. What has happened in the last three years? It is up to the Minister for Transport to divulge to the parliament and to the people of Queensland exactly where that money has come from and why that expenditure has occurred. I am sure that all members in the House today would agree with me that the Pacific Motorway is a magnificent piece of road infrastructure that will ensure the long-term viability of the Gold Coast and Brisbane regions for many years to come.

The infamous footbridge, despite its current 240 per cent budget blow-out, pales into insignificance compared to the icons of other mismanagement. The sad thing is that those blow-outs are more than mismanagement; they mean that people around the state have not been able to get the capital development that their communities need. We are not seeing accountable and responsible spending for the long-term retention and viability of employment.

For example, capital works spending in north Queensland has been reduced by \$75 million while capital spending in Brisbane has skyrocketed from \$1.9 billion last year to \$2.2 billion this year. We should compare the dollars spent per head in rural and regional areas to that spent in Brisbane. Although the benefits to the economy of this state and this nation far outweigh what is achieved in rural and regional areas and what we achieve in some of our city areas, that does not mean that we are going to knock our city cousins or our country cousins. We need each other in

this equation. It is absolutely paramount that we recognise our need for each other in the environment in which we live.

I note that the Treasurer has made much of the statistic that 58 per cent of capital spending is going outside of Brisbane. Of course, that means 42 per cent of the capital spending will occur in Brisbane. When one adds the Moreton region, 52 per cent of the budgeted spending will occur within 100 kilometres of the city. When federally funded road works are extracted, I suspect that one will start to get an even better idea of just what is going on here.

Let me just summarise by saying that in the overall capital works, the Moreton region is down 42 per cent, the Darling Downs is minus 35, Fitzroy is minus 16, the central west is minus 10, Mackay is minus two and the northern region is minus 20, with an overall reduction in the state's capital works budget of some 3.3 per cent. The opposition's point here is that this reduction of capital works, particularly in regional Queensland where unemployment is worst, is a significant step backwards by a state that once led the nation in economic development. We can regain that position.

I noticed that, when delivering the budget two days ago, the Treasurer talked about the private sector. I was very encouraged by those words, because embracing the private sector is absolutely paramount if we are to spread the bigger part of the state budget cake into other areas, whether that be road funding, hospitals or other types of social infrastructure that benefit the state. For example, with large road projects we can certainly invite private enterprise to perform that function. Let us take the example of the Brisbane Valley bypass and the Airtrain Citylink to the Brisbane Airport. This is private enterprise playing a very important and integral role in the provision of infrastructure. In the long term I believe that the officials in Treasury, the Deputy Premier and his policy unit will get credit for that, because it is one way of building infrastructure in the state and taking it up to a 2010 or 2020 status.

Overall, the Beattie Labor government decreases capital expenditure for transport by \$211 million, or 16.8 per cent. There is a decrease in total departmental allocations of \$223 million, or 15.5 per cent. The total Main Roads budget has increased by only \$895,000, or 0.06 per cent, and capital works expenditure has decreased by 3.11 per cent, which is down from \$762 million to \$738 million. This decrease in road funding flies in the face of an increase in federal funding for roads of 6.5 per cent, which is up from \$202 million to \$215 million.

Once again, I have to report that the Cairns tilt train project also continues to rack up the dollars, with \$250 million identified as track upgrades between Rockhampton and Townsville, and signalling upgrades of \$82 million between Rockhampton and the northern capital of Cairns.

The start date of services also seems to have blown out after 2003. Again, I remind members of this House who were not here before 1988—I entered this place in 1989—about the promises made in the run-up to the state election about the tilt train project. When I was minister, I asked the then chief executive of Queensland Rail, Mr Vince O'Rourke, for a costing on a tilt train from Rockhampton to Cairns. I have that documentation signed off by Queensland Rail. I was told it would be in the vicinity of \$850 million to \$1 billion. By the time this project is completed, with track upgrades and signalling upgrades, there probably will not be much change out of that. It is all very well to say what the cars will cost; we all know that. At that time the Premier said that two 10-car sets would cost \$122 million. Last year it was \$132 million for two nine-car sets. In this year's budget it is back up to \$138 million.

We all know from our engineering divisions and private enterprise that from time to time these issues do push costings up, but I say to the government: be honest with the people and tell them the facts, because you cannot hoodwink all of the people all of the time. When Mr Beattie told the *Courier-Mail* on 9 June 1998 what the cost of the two 10-car sets would be, I really believe that the majority of people who do not read the *Courier-Mail* did not realise any different.

Again, the proposed tilt train will be the main beneficiary of the track upgrade work being carried out, and the capital costs should be apportioned accordingly so that the public knows the real cost of this project. There is still no allocation in the budget for the track upgrades north of Townsville where the tilt train is supposed to be operating at speeds of up to 160 to 180 kilometres an hour.

Once again, the opposition asked the Minister for Transport to make public any evaluation of the viability of this project. As I said a while ago, my concern is the cost. I think the general public should be made aware of that cost. Another concern relates to the delay in the production of the 300 KOJX wagons, the order for which was put in place when the Borbidge government was in power in this state.

It is also worth noting that the major growth area in the revenue estimates is the area of fines, which have been predicted to increase by 18 per cent. Most of that relates to traffic fines, with speed camera fines peaking at \$3.4 million for January this year. I note also that the Department of Transport proposes to increase significantly the targeted camera and officer hours as a result of employing more speed cameras. The government has still failed to indicate which programs have benefited from the increased revenue derived from speed cameras.

I heard on the radio this morning that the Queensland government is going to engage in testing drivers for drugs in Queensland. I applaud that. If anyone in this House is not fair dinkum about road safety, I believe they are not true to their constituency. I applaud the Queensland government and the officers of Queensland Transport for deploying that operation. I support it totally. I notice that the government is still not indicating any real advance on the integrated ticketing project, which is yet another project of this government that has blown out in terms of costs and timetable.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Poole): Order! Before I call the member for Woodridge, I would like to acknowledge and welcome the students and teachers from Kandanga State School.

Mrs DESLEY SCOTT (Woodridge—ALP) (2.51 p.m.): Budgets are all about prioritising. As the representative of the Woodridge electorate, I believe the emphasis on the basics of health, education, policing and reducing our unemployment level will serve my people well. I congratulate the Treasurer on this his first budget. I have personally come to this parliament at a time when my electorate has entered a period of growth and renewal.

Many government departments, organisations, community groups and our local council are working collaboratively to improve services and put into place programs for the good of the greater community. For so long this area has suffered the neglect of past governments and has borne the brunt of negative media reports. I am here to inform this House that those days are nearing their end.

The good news stories from this area of Logan City are now numerous. There is a new feeling of optimism, particularly through the ranks of the many volunteer organisations I deal with on a weekly basis. Much of this is as a result of community renewal. The indications throughout the city are that people are taking pride in their environment and tapping into what is a very vibrant, friendly and helpful community. Our government has shown, by practical means, that it is not prepared to stand by and see a community struggling with social disadvantage. It has been prepared to put people, money and effort into raising the standard of living in this area.

A number of major projects have been announced and some have now been under way for some time. I would like to mention just some of these big-ticket items. Logan is soon to commence construction of a \$6 million entertainment and arts centre, \$4 million of which is state government money. The Logan City Council has contributed \$2 million. I recently visited the Logan City Council Administration Centre with Arts Minister Matt Foley to inspect plans for that centre. I believe that it will be a very fine facility when it is completed early in 2002. This will create jobs in the area and enhance the cultural life of our city. A further commitment from this budget will see \$2 million over the next five years for Logan City Council as part of the Millennium Arts Regional Program.

Logan is gaining in its reputation in the performing arts. Last weekend my colleague John Mickel and I attended the mid-year concert of our own Logan City Concert Band, and we thoroughly enjoyed their polished performance. Similarly, our Logan City Choir, Logan City Theatre Group and the many other musical and theatrical groups and performers throughout the city, including our talented school groups, are all serving our community well.

A further vote of confidence in the place that the arts hold in Logan City has been its selection as one of the regional centres for the Biennial Festival of Music. Our residents are eagerly awaiting 21 July, when 'Hallelujah Logan' comes to our beautiful outdoor venue, Logan Gardens. A huge crowd is expected for this day-long feast of gospel music.

In the same precinct as the entertainment and arts centre, right in the shadow of the Logan City Council Administration Centre, is the sporting ground and clubhouse of Logan Brothers Rugby League Club, a long-established club—

Mr Reeves: A great club!

Mrs DESLEY SCOTT: A great club! I agree with the member for Mansfield.

It is a long-established club which fosters the sport amongst many of our youngsters. It is a true saying that once you begin to renovate the house you must carry it through to completion.

So Logan City Council has been very keen to have this major facility reflect the same positive image as this whole precinct will display.

I am pleased to announce to this House that Logan City Council has been successful in its application for a grant under the Sport and Recreation Community Facilities Programs. This will allow it to replace the cluster of add-on buildings which now house the club with a modern, functional clubhouse. The state government contribution is \$500,000.

Another major project under way in the electorate is the upgrade of the Woodridge Railway Station precinct and Station Road shopping area. The Station Road upgrade plan was completed under community renewal with community consultation. The plan is colourful, functional and, when completed, will be a very pleasant place to meet, share a meal or shop. Queensland Rail is presently involved in the station upgrade, having provided a lift for disabled access and improving the station platforms. Gardens, seating and pavers have all been designed to make a colourful, vibrant area.

In recent years, health services in Logan have been vastly improved with extensions to our hospital, which is a wonderful facility. I receive many words of commendation for the special care that the staff give to their patients. I am particularly pleased to see in this budget funding for a new community health centre in Logan Central—right in the heart of my electorate. The existing facility is totally inadequate, and the allocation of \$500,000 in this budget to engage consultants for the design work will lead into the construction of what will be a \$7.5 million centre. Additional funding of \$5 million in the Health budget to help 16,500 people awaiting dental treatment will also be welcomed in my electorate, as will the \$20 million to help reduce hospital waiting lists for elective surgery.

Closely aligned with health issues are the various programs administered by Families Minister Judy Spence. Many of these programs impact on families in my area. The additional funds for various aspects of disability support services will be welcomed, including an expansion of the post-school services for 160 young people leaving school with high support needs. I note with interest that an additional 100 families statewide will receive individualised support and that a total of nine new family support and respite services will provide support to an additional 400 families across the state. These families deserve our help as they often feel isolated and marginalised from society. An additional 50 child protection workers as well as increases in family support and juvenile justice services will also be welcomed.

When it comes to volunteering, none have bigger hearts than our foster parents. They may be faced with trying to mend an emotionally damaged child or possibly a newborn who became drug addicted prior to birth and is suffering withdrawals. This is a task undertaken with great love. I am pleased to see additional support and funding to assist these families. In addition to these measures, there is substantial commitment to improving the job prospects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as well as improved services in many areas of need.

An issue of great significance to my electorate, which has a very high proportion of adult constituents without formal tertiary education or training, is the commitment of this government to provide additional funding to ensure the Smart State becomes a reality. The schools in my electorate are nothing more than inspiring. Principals, teachers and staff are committed to ensuring all of their young students reach their potential and move on a pathway into tertiary education, a traineeship, apprenticeship or are work ready. The measures outlined in this budget will assist with that. The \$18.8 million for additional teachers to reduce class sizes will make the practical aspects of education more manageable, particularly when considered alongside such problems as behaviour management. It will also provide extra support for students with disabilities and special needs.

In my electorate capital spending of \$53,460 will meet commitments to phase 3 of the renewal program at Woodridge State High School. Also contained in the budget is \$164,000 for funding a relocatable building for Crestmead State School and \$37,000 for temporary accommodation at Logan City Special School. I will be working hard to ensure that a good share of the Triple R school maintenance funding comes to schools in my electorate. I seek leave of the House to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

I welcome the funding for schools of excellence, and the expansion of the New Basics trial. I recently attended an information evening in Beenleigh where the New Basic's concept of Rich Tasks was explained. This is a mode of learning which engages the students to learn through practical application. This is our Education system moving on in an innovative way. \$15m in this financial year will also fund the acquisition of computers and technical support to ensure our schools do reflect our Government's 'Smart State' concept.

Within the newly created portfolio of Innovation and Information Economy, a \$100m fund will be created to provide seed money to fast track high quality research. This is in addition to the \$270m Biotechnology Strategy, and should translate into many jobs in the future and a boost in our economy. This Government is not taking a short one-term view of the economy. Rather, it is setting a very firm basis for the development of a 21st Century Industry. This State will reap the rewards of this Government's policy long into the future.

Our Government has once again demonstrated their total commitment to launch an attack on unemployment. We can never be satisfied with the unemployment level until all who wish to work, are able to work. To this end, this Government have budgeted a massive \$842m for jobs and training. This clearly shows where the Beattie Labor Government places its priorities. Jobs, jobs, jobs. Various programs have been devised to meet the needs of the jobless in our community. 'Breaking the Unemployment Cycle' will create 13,200 jobs and training opportunities, reaching a level of 56,000 jobs within 6 years. The 'Get Set for Work' program with a wage subsidy of \$4,000 will assist 500 early school-leavers aged between 15 and 24, while the 45 + age group will be assisted with the 'Back to Work' program which also carries a \$4,000 wage subsidy. These are real job opportunities which will provide real work experience and skills. Many additional apprenticeships, traineeships as well as specific Industry Training Funds will also be available.

Our TAFE Colleges continue to offer superior practical training. Some \$14.9m has been allocated to the Logan Institute of TAFE for training delivery and an additional \$2.4m to build a new Browns Plains facility which is in John Mickel's adjoining electorate of Logan. The Logan TAFE Campus will share in a \$13.7m allocation for information technology including upgrading desktop technology and expanding and improving networks between campuses and within the campus. Additional funding of \$300,000 has been provided to air-condition A Block at the Meadowbrook campus and \$139,000 to purchase major equipment and \$116,000 for minor works. This year, the Institute will offer around 10,000 student places, which gives our students great training opportunities. I joined Federal Member Craig Emerson recently to witness 23 students accept Mick Young Scholarships to assist with their education at the Meadowbrook campus. We are broadening the range of options and providing a climate in which people of all ages and from all backgrounds can receive training and assistance to enter the workforce.

Mr Speaker, I recently had the privilege of joining Minister Foley at the opening of a new Employment and Training and Industrial Relations Office in my electorate. May I say they chose well when looking for a location. This facility joins many other State Government Area and Regional Offices in Logan City. They serve the area well and I believe this office will make a considerable impact on job opportunities and training in the area. Throughout the State a number of large projects as well as our Capital Works Program will provide many thousands of jobs. However, in my own electorate, where small business and retailing make up the large percentage of employment, jobs will be created as our State economy improves. I cannot overstate the devastating effect the GST has had in the small business sector.

Mr Speaker: Policing in Logan has always had the reputation of giving young graduates from the academy five years experience in one. It is indeed a very busy area. However, we are seeing results. I am pleased to see our Government committed to 300 additional Police in this years budget along with 60 civilian positions. In addition to the increase of personnel, there will be a new Police Station at Loganholme, which will assist the Police coverage of the Logan area. Our Police Shop-front at Logan Central has been very successful, with Police also on the beat in the Station Road area. This has made an appreciable difference to the level of crime in these areas. There are many initiatives which are having a positive effect on crime levels in the electorate. Our Neighbourhood Watch Groups have gone from strength to strength. These have been fostered under the Community Renewal Program and the Police/Community Consultative Committee meet regularly. I commend the senior officers in both Logan Central and Browns Plains for their leadership in the community and their commitment to reduce crime.

If I was to select any one program which has been responsible for making the most impact in my community, it would be Community Renewal. Because this program empowers the local people to take responsibility for their own environment and community, it gives ownership and participation on the ground where those whose lives are affected by these decisions, actually are given opportunity to be part of the decision-making process. It is drawing together networks of volunteers who work in conjunction with organisations and State and Local Government to better the lives of all residents. I am fortunate to have two Community Renewal Groups covering Woodridge and Kingston. Their programs are as diverse as: Funding a Community Access School at Kingston, improving our environment with streetscape and park beautification, Neighbourhood Watch, Drug Education, Sports Coaching, Community Bus Networks, Domestic Violence Response, Community Radio Project, Legal Advice Centre, Tenant Support and sponsoring a Police Fun Car. I particularly wish to pay tribute to my Community Reference Groups who work tirelessly for their community. I am happy to report that our budget contains yet another round of funding for both of these Renewal Groups with \$1.5m for both Woodridge And Kingston during this financial year. The Urban Renewal Program of upgrade to hundreds of homes in the area also continues with funding of \$2m for Woodridge and \$2m for Kingston.

Mr Speaker: This budget does deliver much for the people of my electorate. Many other budgetary measures in such departments as Trade, Emergency Services, Primary Industries, Environment & Heritage, Transport, State Development and Tourism also impact upon us. I recently attended the Australian Tourism Exchange Dinner and was asked by one of my colleagues how many tourists would be visiting my electorate. Mr Speaker: Yes, some tourists do visit us, however, my main interest in tourism is because of the many young people it employs in the Hospitality Industry. Tourism is set to grow markedly in the next 10 years and Logan city is ideally situated to supply a host of skilled workers to service this great industry. It is also highly likely that many of our businesses, particularly those in the food industry will also gain a boost.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, I have a most optimistic outlook for the future. I believe our Government is showing both social and economic responsibility. We are a Government who above all, care for people. This budget should be welcomed by the people of Queensland.

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Keppel—NPA) (3.01 p.m.): In the budget paper relating to industrial relations the government trumpets the fact that jobs will be created throughout Queensland through—

... a fair and efficient industrial relations system that fosters economic prosperity, job security and harmonious, productive working environments that meet the needs of employers and employees.

This is a furphy. The government has been moving to introduce an archaic and out-dated system of industrial relations. It is forcing businesses that have the option of going to the federal system for their industrial regime to do so. Employee choice is no longer available. The government brought in changes to the regime which effectively force the work force back to awards. This is called looking after your mates. The unions are concerned that they are losing members hand over fist.

Mr Livingstone interjected.

Mr LESTER: No, the member does not have to worry. It is quite okay. Instead of the unions working through this problem by dragging themselves and their out-dated practices into the 21st century instead of the 19th, they are getting the government, through legislation, to erect protectionist barriers to ensure the unions' continued survival. As a result of this, business is hurting, particularly the engine room of a state like Queensland, that is, small business. The outcome of these non-productive moves is immediately apparent. Unemployment in Queensland at present is a dismal nine per cent, which is higher than when the National Party left government. It is not just a little higher but half a percentage point higher. Some 20,000 more people are unemployed now than there were then, a quarter of whom are young people, and that is very sad indeed.

In my electorate alone the unemployment rate is approximately 15 per cent. This may not concern the Treasurer too greatly, because his electorate has about only a third of that unemployment rate, but it is seriously hurting my constituents and other constituents who live on coastal resorts up and down the Queensland coast. It is obvious that this government cannot claim any record on job creation. Rather, it has to admit that it has dismally failed. More specifically, I note that the number of claims under the Queensland workers compensation system has increased. This, too, is not good enough. Also, only around 50 per cent of prosecution briefs were completed within six months. This is also not good enough.

On a different note, I certainly welcome the review of the Electrical Safety Office. Better electrical safety is vital for the safety of Queensland. That is why I challenged the government this morning to reintroduce the vital subsidy on safety switches.

Under my other hat as shadow minister for the environment, I have just a few comments. Over seven million hectares in Queensland are held in the national parks system, which is equivalent in size to a small country. This is a credit to the long-term vision of many Queensland governments over the last few decades. However, it is a disgrace for the government to continually focus on acquisition of additional land if areas already protected are not well cared for and maintained. If we do not do that, the very conservation principles the land is protected for will be lost. The National Party has for many years been calling on the government to introduce a good neighbourhood policy on all national parks throughout the state.

As stated by the Local Government Association's damning report into Queensland national parks, feral pigs and other feral animals, weeds, fire control and fencing are just a few aspects of the care of our great parks which are falling down. While there has been some comment in the budget relating to this, we will need to see the practicalities of these initiatives to be convinced. Farmers and graziers adjacent to our parks are fed up with having to deal with problems directly caused by the land next door without the normal ability to go next door and tell the neighbour to 'buck up'. The government is just not listening. On the other hand, local shires find that they have lost rate revenue as well.

Feral pigs in particular are a major threat to the whole of Queensland. It is generally acknowledged that if foot-and-mouth disease reaches the shores of this state a major disaster will occur due to the uncontrolled feral pig population, because they will be a major spreader of the disease. It is time this problem is addressed. Queensland's spending is a disgrace. The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service has underspent by more than \$7 million. Only \$4.50 a hectare is being spent in Queensland. New South Wales spends nearly \$25 per hectare on national parks. Tasmania and Victoria both spend around \$10. Yet the government has the absolute gall to say that it is increasing spending in this coming year. Interestingly, this increase is noted in an apologetic note in the budget papers when justifying an increased total spend to \$5.50 per hectare—exactly what it had targeted but a rate of expenditure that was not achieved last year. I welcome the real increase in funding as very necessary. This tactic, however, is more generally known as giving with one hand while taking with the other. The great increases trumpeted by the government are just another deception the government consistently pulls on the people of Queensland.

I also note in the figures provided that no indigenous joint management arrangements have been finalised in the last year, failing to meet the reasonable target provided. In the same vein, only half the coastal management plans of last year's target have been fulfilled. The coastal management plan process has been seriously criticised by both land-holders and community representatives. I question whether the non-fulfilment of this target is related to poor management and poor process.

I will now deal with issues pertaining to the Keppel electorate. I again appeal in a very meaningful way for the establishment of a 24-hour police station at Yeppoon. We have been given no indication in the budget in relation to the new building we would need to do this job properly or indeed in relation to any staff projections. It appears that the issue has not been addressed, even though the establishment number of uniformed officers has been reduced, as a result of sickness and other things, from 15 to 11. There are I think two trainees there now, but that is not filling the gap. In the meantime we have lost, hopefully temporarily, the services of the officer in charge, John Hemray, who unfortunately last Friday afternoon, while coaching junior lifesavers, suffered a stroke.

Mr Reeves interjected.

Mr LESTER: I just find that remark absurd. I am talking about a police officer.

Mr Reeves: Sorry.

Mr LESTER: I accept the member's apology. I am quite happy to have the whole matter withdrawn from *Hansard*. I am very serious about this chap, who has done such a great job. I mentioned it specifically in a private member's statement the other day. Sure, members can have a go at me on issues that are important, but not on something like that. This man has just been an absolutely wonderful person—he has done a great job in the community—and was stricken with a stroke at 46 years of age.

Mr Schwarten: No warning.

Mr LESTER: There was no warning. It was a dreadful situation. As the member for Rockhampton knows, he was an excellent officer doing a great job, as indeed are all of our police officers, both in Rockhampton and on the Capricorn Coast. We all wish John a speedy recovery. Certainly our thoughts are with him. Not for a moment would I suggest that this stroke was caused by his extreme workload, but it is possible that it could have been a contributing factor.

The other police officers are under stress. One of the reasons our establishment figure has decreased from 15 to 11 for uniformed police is the workload causing sickness to these officers. An increase in staff is something I appeal for from the bottom of my heart. In addition to that, CIB staffing is down from three to two. That is a very serious situation as well. Next week I will be talking with the superintendent of police to see if we can do something about this chronically dreadful situation.

There is a need to ensure that health services in the central region, particularly on the Capricorn Coast, are not forgotten about. This issue arises irrespective of which party is in government. It cuts across the health fraternity in general. There seems to be this syndrome whereby the base hospital is developed while surrounding hospitals become virtually places people go to for a few minutes before an ambulance takes them to Rockhampton. That is an oversimplification of the issue, but it is a serious one.

We on the Capricorn Coast will not give up until such time as we see a new hospital established—a hospital that will cater for the growing needs of the Capricorn Coast. The Capricorn Coast is growing by 1,400 people per year. In the year 2020 there will be over 40,000 people there. If that does not warrant a proper hospital with specialist services, then I do not know what does.

It is obvious to me that a number of our very eminent specialists in Rockhampton are quite happy to live on the Capricorn Coast. What I hear from time to time about our not being able to staff this hospital with specialists is tripe. There are engineers and every other type of professional person living on the Capricorn Coast, and I am very sure that our specialist doctors would be happy to live there as well. Some already do.

The road between Yeppoon and Rockhampton is in need of widening. We need a dual highway system. There have been a number of extraordinarily serious accidents resulting in death—some quite obviously a result of people not being as cautious as they should be on such a road and unfortunately some as a result of people just breaking the rules. Indeed, a recent accident was caused by somebody overtaking on a double line. I will not say any more about

that. I just caution people, young people in particular: for goodness sake, try to stick to the road rules. They are there for a reason. They are there to save drivers and others from being killed.

Part of that road is dual lane highway. The Main Roads people tell me that the current volume of about 8,000 vehicles per day is not sufficient for a dual lane highway. All I can say is that our area is advancing. We need to be sure that we are looking to the future. There seems to be incapacity on the part of governments to look to what things might be like in the future. If we did some of that work now, in addition to building overtaking lanes, then we might start to achieve something.

I often wonder just how much money would be saved if governments across the board became proactive and started to anticipate needs, instead of building things only after a problem has been identified. Surely these days, with planners and all these sorts of people going through university, we can actually plan for the future and build accordingly.

The road from Yeppoon to Rockhampton is very busy, and it will get much busier with the progress we are achieving in Rockhampton. That progress can be seen in the almost doubling of the kill at the meatworks known as Lakes Creek and by the magnesium plant.

I believe the university still has a very good future. From time to time the member for Rockhampton and I have to really gee up the prospects of the university. We both supported that very strongly and it is probably fair to say that we would like to see it going better. I think it is fair to say that that is a joint suggestion. We will be doing our best to ensure that that happens, in the interests of all of our students. I believe that there are great prospects there. There are some extraordinarily innovative people at that university. I believe Professor Glenice Hancock, the new vice-chancellor, has some new directions in which she would like to take the university. She is a very capable person and I am sure she will do very well indeed.

We in Rockhampton have the ball at our feet at the moment with the new industry that is coming on, along with the industry that can be generated from that point. We need our university to be extremely innovative, to work with industry and to set an example by achieving good results so that people from all over the world and the rest of Australia will either want to come to us or will want to deal through us with our outsourcing programs.

I am quite happy with the way in which the education systems are working in the electorate of Keppel. I am looking forward to TAFE becoming more innovative by setting up a videoconferencing network out of Emu Park. The Frenchville school, which has an outstanding record as probably one of the great state schools of Queensland, is at a point where I think some work needs to be done on the exterior of the school.

Mr Swarten: That is in hand.

Mr LESTER: The minister has been quite helpful in the past, and I have acknowledged that in a letter to my electorate. We jointly look after that school now. I have written to the minister about a number of issues—painting, and so on. I understand that this work is going to be completed. I look forward to a joint inspection there when we can both get around to it.

Mr Swarten: I think it is next week.

Mr LESTER: Next week? Righto.

Mr Swarten: You know what these things are like.

Mr LESTER: We had better not discuss our diaries right here, but I gather that that is going to happen, and we will take it from there.

There are a number of other issues that I wish to mention. I would still like to see the government put forward money so that we can buy out the remaining mining exploration leases and extend the Byfield National Park. If that were done, it would make a major contribution to the environment, to national parks and to other places people can visit. The Byfield area is unique. More and more people are going there. In fact, with the bitumen surfacing continuing towards Shoalwater Bay, more Army vehicles will be able to drive through Yeppoon.

Time expired.

Mr PEARCE (Fitzroy—ALP) (3.21 p.m.): When I look at what this year's budget delivers for the electorate of Fitzroy, I have to first acknowledge that the budget is for the benefit of all Queenslanders, not just the Fitzroy electorate. It is a budget that delivers on pre-election commitments. It is a budget delivered by a government with a social conscience and a focus on jobs. Much of the big dollar issues have been out in the public arena for the last two days, and there has been plenty in the media about that.

Economists and those who are leaders or representatives of groups or organisations have spoken about the budget. International economic ratings agency Standard & Poor's has said that the state's accounts are in the best shape of any state in the country. That is a credit to our Treasurer and to the cabinet of the Queensland government. There are those who have been negative and those who have been positive, and that is always going to be the case when a government brings down a budget of this type. In the interests of my constituents, I intend to touch on some of the bigger portfolios so as to allow for people to get an understanding of just how much it does cost to provide services and infrastructure to this vast state.

Because of the number of members who wish to take part in this debate and the many hours of debate that are ahead of us, I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech, which is a prepared speech, incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The average person in the street in the Fitzroy region has limited understanding of what the budget process is all about. I am, from time to time, challenged about the amount of revenue collected from our region—primary industry—coal and taxes and the amount returned to the region.

A state budget is like a family budget—there are limited financial resources to meet the needs, so we have to spread the funds available to best meet the needs of the government family—the people of Queensland. For example, this government has identified capital works of some \$5.1 billion in this budget year.

It is expected that these capital works can support more than 46,000 full-time jobs. The \$5.1 billion includes \$1.6 billion for railroad and port infrastructure; \$382 million for hospitals and other health facilities; \$311 million for schools, TAFE and other education facilities. Education is to get a record \$4.3 billion.

Health gets another record recurrent budget of \$4.06 billion—\$13 million of which will go to the upgrade of hospital medical equipment. The Beattie government will invest more than \$842 million in jobs and training through the employment training and youth portfolio with more than \$100 million for the 'Breaking the Unemployment Cycle' initiative.

The police budget gets an increase of \$69 million to its operating budget and an extra \$25 million for the corrective services budget. The addition of funds for the police operating budget means that the \$870 million allocated is the highest ever provided. The transport and main roads budget for this financial year is \$3.39 billion. Transport gets \$1.27 billion and main roads gets \$2.121 billion, which includes \$1.11 billion for roadworks. This funding will ensure that 17,500 workers will keep their jobs.

The Environmental Protection Authority and Queensland Parks and Wildlife will receive \$341 million and \$215 million respectively. \$10 million has been allocated for 80 new ranger jobs. Disability Services Queensland will get an extra \$31.6 million, pushing the operating budget up to \$304.1 million. The Department of Families goes up to \$335 million—an increase of \$36.6 million.

An allocation of \$400 million has been made to manage Queensland's natural resources and further develop growth in the mining industry. Primary industries and rural communities is to get an extra \$10 million, boosting the portfolio budget to \$1,299.6 million.

I am pleased to see the FarmBis initiative allocated \$15 million over the next three years—this is a very popular and effective initiative. The list goes on—with \$10 million extra for Legal Aid. \$250,000 has been allocated to establish Australia's first workplace bullying task force. This task force will look at workplace bullies and it will be interesting to watch the development of what I consider to be a long overdue need.

An allocation of \$239.4 million has been made to run the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority; \$235.84 million for the Queensland Ambulance Services and \$42.27 million for counter disaster and rescue.

I will now localise some of the funding earmarked for the Fitzroy electorate and some of the projects that will benefit the region. I welcome the announcement of a number of capital works projects for the Fitzroy electorate, including—

- \$131,767 in Cooler Schools subsidy for Ridgeland State School;
- \$101,582 for half general learning area block (stage 2) at Woorabinda State School;
- \$144,823 in Cooler Schools subsidy for Mount Morgan State High School;
- \$400,000 for new Dog Squad facility at Capricornia Correction Centre;
- \$1,116 million to upgrade infrastructure to increase coal train speed to 80kph;
- \$1.226 million for construction of new council chambers at Woorabinda;
- \$500,000 over five years for Mount Morgan Council—Millennium Arts Regional Initiatives;
- \$338,000 total funds for public housing capital works projects in electorate;
- \$6.5 million for the construction of bridges on the Dawson River, near Theodore;
- \$1.7 million to complete widening of existing pavement on Fitzroy Development (Dingo Mount Flora) Road between Rolfe Creek and Bore Creek floodway;
- \$500,000 on same road for works between Valkyrie school and Broadsound shire boundary;
- \$500,000 to commence widening between Bore Creek floodway and 'Cosmos'; and
- \$3.5 million to complete overtaking lanes on Bruce Highway between Benaraby and Rockhampton.

Under the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS), the following state government contributions are provided for local government projects—

- \$100,000 for the replacement of bridge over Dee River at Deeford, with a total subsidy of \$250,000;

\$68,000 to commence sealing of a 1.8km section of Razorback Road, from Moonmera to boundary, in Fitzroy shire, with a total subsidy of \$138,000;

\$30,000 to commence paving and sealing of Bluff—Jellinbah tipsite/Racecourse Road, within Duaringa Shire, with a total subsidy of \$108,900;

\$50,000 to complete paving and sealing of a section of Valkyrie Road school bus route, within Broadsound shire, with a total subsidy of \$100,000; and

\$50,000 to gravel a second section of Moongan Road, within Mount Morgan city.

I am also pleased that there appears to be additional funding allocated for the ongoing rehabilitation of the Mount Morgan mine site. This year's allocation of \$11.8 million will mean the pump back system, which returns leached polluted waters back into the old mine, will continue to be funded.

Mrs PRATT (Nanango—Ind) (3.23 p.m.): In replying to this budget, I first congratulate the Treasurer on handling such a huge responsibility—and a huge financial responsibility—in trying to address the needs of the whole state. Obviously, this is not a non-Labor government budget, as we can see by the figures. But I will concentrate on the positives, not the negatives.

In common with most governments, this Beattie government has concentrated most of the resources on the coastal fringes, as it has done in all the other budgets for which I have been here. I suppose that is mainly because that is where the votes are. Everyone would be aware that there is a constant migration from rural areas to the cities and other coastal centres, and their needs must also be addressed. So I ask the Treasurer to try to concentrate on taking industry west of the ranges, because that is where it is sadly lacking. We really do need to establish a 'let's populate the interior' mentality, not just to concentrate on the coastal strips. We need the government to encourage industries and businesses. We do not need them crowding into the cities, as they always have done. Every day I see kids leaving our rural areas and going to the city. The people with the will to achieve the potential that this country is capable of in the long term are lost due to short-term lack of vision.

Kingaroy is one of the largest crop growing areas in Queensland. We have so much produce that we could have some sort of industry out there—a value added industry—which would keep all our young people there. We could keep the complexes going 24 hours a day and keep them employed—anything from peanuts to tomatoes and olives, which is a growing industry in our area. I ask that, in the future, the Treasurer considers this type of thing for our rural areas.

We have to scrap the level playing field that everyone keeps talking about and realise that small business cannot compete with the multinationals. Small businesses are Australia's largest employer. To that end, I ask the Treasurer also to consider at some stage offering small business—and by that I mean businesses with fewer than 10 employees—some sort of subsidy. If he did that, I think he would probably solve the Premier's problem of getting our unemployment rate down to five per cent. Small businesses employ people, and he needs to address that issue. And if he did provide incentives to small businesses, that would solve more problems than he has solved already—which I guarantee is not many.

The government loves throwing money around on job schemes and training people to do things over and over again. West of the ranges, job training facilities are really just a way of jiggling the figures. A person who is doing a six-week course at a TAFE college will come off the unemployment figures. If they do one hour a week they are classed as being employed; but I do not think anyone in their right mind would really class that as being employed. However, there must be jobs for them to do once they have finished these courses. Nobody would deny that we need to provide some sort of training, but there must be jobs for them, otherwise they will go back onto the list of unemployed.

The same thing is happening with the mature-aged student subsidy, which appears to be a bit of a con job. The criteria call for people aged over 45 who are not receiving intensive assistance from an employment agency. I have been informed that most people aged over 45 in Kingaroy are receiving intensive assistance and, therefore, do not qualify at all. So one really must juggle the figures constantly.

One thing I am really grateful for is the Tarong extension. It has been an ongoing project in my area for a long time—back when it was the electorate of Barambah. This puts a lot of strain on local businesses. In particular, I have had a lot of correspondence from Nanango Hire Service, which has been operating for over 20 years. When the Tarong north power station came to the area, three extra large companies came in—Donpra; Compressor Hire Service and Wreckair—and they all opened depots in Nanango. A lot of business went to those companies. As a result, one local fellow is just about on his knees and out the door. So when big business does come to an area, we should consider the effect on local industries.

One major concern, once Tarong north is finished and those three operators decide to move on—as they more than likely will—is what will happen to Nanango Hire Service and other similar businesses which will have been put out of business because they cannot maintain viability while these other companies skim the cream from local business?

Mount Mee, Woodford, Toogoolawah and Esk are new areas for me. It has taken me quite a while to come to grips with what they are asking for. I am still not 100 per cent sure as to what they have already asked for. At the moment one of the major concerns, particularly in Mount Mee—which is a beautiful area—is the regular cuts in the electricity supply. I ask the government to consider addressing this issue. This is a dairy farming area, and frequently farmers are inconvenienced when the power fails and they are left with half-milked cows. Anyone who has worked on a dairy farm knows exactly what that means. It is a lot of hard work. The farmers either have to let the cows out and bring them back when the power resumes or they keep milking by hand. It is a huge task for these people. Power outages is one problem that I would really like to see remedied. It is quite inconceivable to me that these people are so close to Brisbane—in fact, where I come from, in Kingaroy, we would say that Mount Mee was almost a suburb of Brisbane because it is so close—yet they still have to suffer this sort of bad service. We know that the people on the electricity boards do their best, and they work hard. Again, resources seem to be the main problem.

Recently I attended Mr Bleakley's funeral at a tiny church in Linville, which is a beautiful place. Mr Bleakley was held in high regard. There would have been over 1,000 people at his funeral. He was killed when electricity arced out to some irrigation pipes. I endorse the suggestion by the member for Keppel that we offer a rebate to enable safety switches to be installed in all houses. I do not believe that would be a difficult thing to do. We offered a rebate for the installation of fire alarms. I know that safety switches are more expensive, but one life should never have a price put on it.

There has been some confusion since the electoral boundaries were changed. An awful lot of people currently in the Callide electorate whom I previously represented still approach me, firstly, because their member is a long way away and, secondly, because they are used to coming to me. Recently an ambulance broke down on the road to the Burrandown races. That may not sound like much of a problem to many people, but those races are held a fair way out. It was an unpalatable thought that someone might get hurt out there but not be able to access ambulance services. Usually there is only one ambulance officer, which seems to be the norm out our way. We would like an increase in staffing levels in the area. Even though I no longer actually represent those residents, I am aware that they would appreciate action in this regard.

The fact that there is no transport to major centres like Toowoomba, where most people access specialist medical services, presents a major problem. This lack of transport has made it very difficult for a lot of people. In the past a bus was available, and there was an attempt to secure a subsidy, but the request was knocked back. We definitely need transport of some description in our area to carry people to and from various places, particularly aged persons or those who have conditions which have to be assessed by specialists who operate from Toowoomba. Some people with illnesses that affect their driving ability require a medical certificate in order to renew their licences, but they must be assessed by doctors outside of the Nanango electorate. These people have to try to get someone to take them to Toowoomba. There are public doctors in Kingaroy who are willing to provide these services, but they have not been given a licence to do so. That is another issue that I ask the government to consider.

As to the DPI—we must take moves to control African lovegrass and giant rat-tail grass, both of which are growing prolifically in our area. The problem has existed for so long now that people have nearly lost their entire farms. There is an amazing dingo population in the region. I believe this is mainly due to the fact that land-holders and graziers can no longer carry firearms in their utilities, as they previously did. However, the problem with dingoes in the Burnett/Wide Bay area is increasing. It is becoming quite frightening. In two separate instances, a child and an adult were stalked and surrounded by a pack of dingoes. That was a very frightening episode for them.

Another problem in the area is high insurance costs, which are forcing the closure of many recreational facilities. I realise that there is not a lot the government can do about this, but it should change the law to make the indemnity form a binding document, otherwise all recreation facilities will close down, to the detriment of people in rural areas.

Recently I attended a meeting of the foster carers group. I noticed that yesterday in question time the minister acknowledged the funding need in this area. These people are to be admired by everybody. Some of the people I met with had been foster carers for over 30 and 40 years. As

one gentleman said, he had a child given to him for four days and he ended up caring for that child for 18 years. He had also cared for another 100 children. Most of the time, these people provide for these children out of their own pockets. Not one of the people I met would have been classed as earning an above average income. They all had the biggest hearts. They have many needs. I seriously ask that the government put some money their way.

In Kingaroy, Kilcoy and the surrounding areas, health is a major issue. The waiting times for surgery are still unacceptably long. Every time I inquire at the various health facilities, I am advised that waiting lists are up around three to four years. However, when I come into this place it is denied that the waiting lists are that long. When we ask what will happen to the patients from St Aubyns Hospital, which is now closed, we are told that the hospital at Kingaroy will be able to cope with three to five patients. I can assure the parliament that there are always a few more than that needing attention. However, the staff at the hospital say that these people will more than likely be shipped out to Wondai. It is not acceptable. This hospital is now up for sale. It is the only private hospital in the area. I ask the government to consider at least offering some assistance to the Kingaroy council, which is hoping in some way to raise the funds to purchase this hospital so that we at least have a private facility in the area.

This government needs to put the people first. Although many people have said that the Lang Park redevelopment is a great thing—and they say the same about the pedestrian footbridge, which remains unfinished outside my window here at parliament—I often wonder whether this money should be spent not on monuments to Mr Beattie or the government but on the people of this state.

There are so many matters that need to be addressed that it is hard to know where to start. In terms of education, the school in Esk, the SE unit at Toogoolawah and the school in Kilcoy were all promised various facilities, whether it be a library, a tuckshop, or something along those lines. However, they are still waiting. For some, that promise was made three years ago; others have been waiting up to six or seven years. No government should be proud of that record, especially since the people have been told that the money was there and was allocated. I say to the government: don't say it, just do it. It should deliver on these promises.

I have to thank the previous government for supplying the Blackbutt police with a four-wheel-drive vehicle. We have been after that for a while. It finally came through and everyone is really happy about that. I can tell members that it travels really fast, because on one occasion the police used it to pull me up for speeding. In fact, it is doing more than its fair share of work. I have to commend all the police in my area. They are very diligent on the roads.

Mr Mackenroth: interjected.

Mrs PRATT: It does not matter. I would rather be pulled up for speeding. You never know, it could have saved my life.

Mr Reeves: The Speaker made representation to get that.

Mrs PRATT: We all did. To be quite honest, I do not care who gets recognition for anything. As long as people get what they need and deserve in their area, it does not matter who gets the credit for it.

Public works and housing is another issue that is very big in my area. A lot of people come to see me about that. I had a pregnant woman only weeks off giving birth come to me looking for a place. She had split up with her husband, but there was nothing to be found in the area. She ended up in a caravan until six or seven weeks after the birth of her baby. That was not very good for her other three children or herself. Nobody wants surplus, empty houses—and that is understandable—but I would like to see a little bit more emergency housing in my area. If anyone wants to have a look, they would see that there is very little available.

Mr Schwarten: I agree with you. You had better write to the federal government and tell them.

Mrs PRATT: I will do that, but I am asking the minister to do that, too, because it is the responsibility of all of us.

As I said, the government needs to address the lack of public transport in the bush. There is no train service—there is nothing. We need to try to get people some sort of public transport—whatever type it is. We need it. I would also like to refer to the amount that officers get paid for their mileage when they have to travel. It would be nice to see that amount increase in line with the CPI. If that occurs, hopefully these people will get further along in their fields.

One thing that I am really pleased about—and it is something that I have pursued, not quite so much in parliament but with departments—is that finally I have been told that the Blackbutt Range road is on the five-year RIP. It is a dangerous road. A fair few accidents have occurred on it. I can tell members that on a foggy night, at two or three in the morning, it can be quite hairy travelling along that road. The area of that road between Kilcoy and the top of the range to Yarraman needs addressing. Owing to the number of trucks that travel along that road, especially to Tarong north, driving along that road is particularly dangerous. Although the people who drive the trucks to Tarong north obey the road rules, the trucks cut up the road severely. So I am pleased that that area of road is going to be addressed.

Another area that is now located in my electorate is Bellthorpe. Its roads are not conducive to safe motoring. In fact, it is really dangerous driving along those roads. I believe that one part of one road is shut for two and a half hours each day to allow for the safe passage of the school bus. I do not believe that is acceptable, considering how far away Bellthorpe is. I know that area is covered by the Caboolture shire, but money is needed to make that road wider. I have discovered that the people in this community have a unique attitude to a lot of their roads. They offer their services free to the council to widen the roads and have done a lot of work that way just so that their children can be safe and secure.

Mr NEIL ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (3.43 p.m.): It is a pleasure to speak to the 2001-02 state budget, which delivers on all of the Beattie government's election commitments and, of course, builds on the government's achievements that it made in its first term. The budget concentrates on the real issues: education, health, employment and training. I want to give my congratulations to the Treasurer, Terry Mackenroth, on a great job.

The *Courier-Mail* described this budget as a budget that delivers to Labor's heartland. The *Courier-Mail* also made the point that the Treasurer has had quite a life journey from a being a boilermaker to becoming Treasurer. As the *Courier-Mail* said, that just shows that if you put your mind to it, you can achieve anything. So I congratulate the Treasurer on a good, solid, first budget in this new Labor term.

As the parliamentary secretary to the Minister for Employment, Training and Youth and Minister for the Arts, I want to say a few words about some of the significant endeavours of that department in terms of employment. Firstly, from a whole-of-government perspective, there is a capital works program over the next 12 months that provides more than \$5.1 billion to support more than 46,300 full-time jobs. It is important to note that 58 per cent of that expenditure will be spent outside the Brisbane region.

There are some specific departmental initiatives that I want to highlight, including a \$100 million allocation for 13,200 jobs and training opportunities during the 2001-02 year under the \$470m Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative. There are, in fact, four new programs under that initiative that I want to detail. Firstly, the \$10 million Youth for the Environment and Local Communities program will create an additional 600 traineeships for 15 to 24 year olds, which will enable them to obtain nationally accredited qualifications through work in their local communities in areas such as environmental protection, horticulture and waste management. There is also \$5 million for the Get Set for Work program, which provides intensive employment and training assistance and a \$4,000 wage subsidy to assist 500 unemployed early school leavers. There is a \$500,000 Back to Work program, which provides job search and introductory computer training to unemployed, mature-aged people aged over 45 years. An amount of \$1.8 million has also been allocated for the Experience Pays program, which provides cash incentives of up to \$4,000 to private and/or public sector employers for employing a long-term unemployed person aged 45 years or over who has been unemployed for at least 12 months.

An amount of \$726.4 million has been allocated for vocational education and training services to create a highly skilled and adaptable work force to meet the needs of Queensland as the Smart State. An amount of \$10 million has been allocated over the next two years to establish an aviation centre of excellence at the Brisbane Airport. Finally, in this budget more than \$17.5 million has been allocated to create jobs and training opportunities for more than 4,920 people in the metropolitan Brisbane north region. I am proud of the work of the department in this regard, particularly the programs that assist young people, long-term unemployed people and mature-aged unemployed people, to enable them to get back into meaningful employment.

It has been a little disappointing to listen to some coalition members, and indeed the member from Nanango, who spoke before me, who have been very negative about some of these employment programs. The facts are that the labour market programs of the Department of Employment and Training are addressing specifically the disadvantaged in the labour market.

They are particularly targeting young people and assisting them into traineeships and apprenticeships. They are particularly targeting long-term unemployed people and giving them the basic skills and confidence to move from a very disadvantaged situation into employment. The members who have criticised these labour market programs need only look at the success rates of those programs in moving significant numbers of people from unemployment—long-term unemployment in particular—into employment. I think that to criticise those programs is poor form.

We just need to ask the apprentices or the trainees who have received a job as a result of the subsidies that the state government provides to the private sector and the public sector to find out that those programs are not a waste of time, or talk to those long-term unemployed people or disadvantaged people who have received short-term employment as a result of these programs and then have moved on into employment. That is the real test of these programs. As I said, it was extremely disappointing to hear the criticism.

The member for Nanango criticised the mature-aged employment programs. In fact, she said that they were a con—that people on intensive assistance from the federal government were not eligible. The facts are that the state government is not here to pick up the federal government's responsibilities. In fact, it has an obligation to provide assistance to these people. We are providing assistance to those people that the federal government is leaving behind.

I wish to talk on some local issues affecting my electorate. Last year in my speech during the budget debate, I spoke about the need for a significant upgrade to the Banyo Police Station. I am pleased to say that under Police Minister Tony McGrady—in fact, the decision was made by the former Police Minister, Tom Barton—a new police beat was established at Banyo. The police beat has two officers assigned, a senior constable and a constable. Also, a police vehicle and a newly refurbished police station have been provided. That police beat was the result of an intensive community campaign over the last four to five years. It is very pleasing that it was delivered by a Labor government. The new station operates flexibly to meet the needs of the local community. Currently, there are five shifts per week available which are worked according to needs. The important thing for local people to note about the operation is that if they do attend the station and there are no officers on site, in the main they will be out in the community. It is advisable for local people to telephone the station before visiting it, and the new number is 3000 6800.

The other development following the establishment of the new police beat is the re-establishment of the Banyo Community Police Advisory Group, which provides a forum for local people to meet face to face on a regular basis with their local police. We try to ensure that the CPAG, as it is referred to, meets every three months. We have local police in attendance, and local residents can talk with them directly about local law and order issues. We are re-establishing that group and are calling for interested people in the community to put their names forward to participate.

I was pleased to see that there was an allocation in the budget of \$250,000 for the continued refurbishment of Boondall Police Station. In last year's budget there was an allocation of \$100,000. The new allocation builds upon that and will provide a better facility for our local police to work from.

With respect to local educational issues, the budget provides \$2.3 million out of a total of \$6 million that is being allocated to the Australian Catholic University to enable it to relocate from its current site at Mitchelton to the Banyo seminary campus.

Mr Wells: A fine initiative.

Mr NEIL ROBERTS: The former minister was a part of that significant decision, and I thank him for that. The move by the university to Banyo in January 2003 will significantly revitalise the local community and the local economy. We are very much looking forward to that and the significant spin-off benefits that it will provide to the local community.

We are ensuring that there will be strong links developed with the local Banyo State High School, which already has very strong vocational educational linkages with the community. We feel that we are getting the best of both worlds: we will have a high school that has a direct link—it is across the road, in fact—with a tertiary institution and, for a number of years, it has also been building very strong links with local industry and employers to provide vocational pathways for students.

There has been significant community interest and overwhelming support for the creation of a P-12 school on the site of the Banyo State High School. This proposal would involve the amalgamation of Nudgee State School and Banyo State High School on the one site. It would

involve the creation of three subschools: a junior school covering preschool to year 5, a middle school of years 6 to 9 and a senior school of years 10 to 12. At the last meeting of the project steering committee, the committee recommended to the Minister for Education that a P-12 school proceed on the basis that it would be a viable and innovative educational proposition for the area. This recommendation is, of course, subject to Treasury approval. As of today's date, 22 June, it is this approval that we are waiting for.

The budget contains an allocation of \$175,700 for a new relocatable building at Virginia State School, which is a school that I acquired after the last redistribution. I am pleased to have Virginia State School included in my electorate, along with St Dymphna's catholic school in Zillmere. I look forward to working with both those schools to improve the level of services and support that they offer to their students and staff.

A sum of \$161,716 has been allocated to provide a new relocatable building at Boondall State School, which is one of the fastest growing schools in my electorate. Boondall State School has also received a \$60,000 allocation under the Transport portfolio together with a \$60,000 contribution from the Brisbane City Council, making a total of \$120,000, to be used for the provision of a car park and drop-off zone, which is much needed by that local school community. In the last year, we also provided in excess of \$30,000 for a new car park at Geebung State School and also for the completion of some upgrade works on the school hall—specifically, the school hall floor was resurfaced to make it more usable.

With respect to local catholic schools, the state government provides significant funding to support capital works and maintenance in local catholic and non-government schools. The state government provides direct grants to the respective capital assistance authorities, for example, Queensland Catholic Education, which distributes funds to schools on behalf of the state government. This year, the government's allocation to the non-government sector for capital works and maintenance was a significant \$42,288,000. Of course, I am happy to support my local catholic schools in their endeavours to secure a share of this funding for necessary local works.

With regard to transport issues, local railway stations have received significant upgrades over the past 12 months and more are planned. Lifts have been installed and station upgrades have occurred at Northgate, Virginia, Sunshine, Geebung and Zillmere stations, and more work is planned over the next year, in particular, for the provision of new lifts for the Nundah Railway Station. The contract for that work was let in April and is expected to be completed around October or November of this year. That is a \$1.3 million capital works allocation.

With respect to Nudgee Railway Station, a new pedestrian crossing will be installed. Design works were undertaken in July. The pedestrian crossing is expected to be operational towards the end of the year at a cost of about \$300,000. We will also be asphaltting the car park at Nudgee Railway Station, which has been the subject of many complaints from local residents to me in recent times. I take this opportunity of thanking Queensland Rail for responding to local community concerns about all of those issues.

Sandgate Road is being upgraded further. A sum of \$450,000 has been allocated for asphalt resurfacing along the road in my electorate and in neighbouring electorates. A sum of \$11.8 million has been allocated to complete the Nundah cut and cover tunnel, which is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Portions of the new work are already in use and will be progressively opened over the next few months. I am pleased to see that the minister has agreed that the local community and the community organisations will be involved in the opening celebrations.

A significant win in the last budget will come to fruition in the next couple weeks, which is the opening of the Zillmere Police Citizens Youth Club, which will provide significant benefits, particularly to the communities of Zillmere, Boondall and Geebung. It is intended to have an official opening on 7 July. The state government has provided \$1.1 million and the Brisbane City Council has given significant support through the provision of \$100,000 in direct cash, in-kind support since the commencement of construction plus also the use of council land. We thank them for that. This will be a multipurpose facility that we intend will be used by people of all ages within the Zillmere and surrounding communities.

With regard to public housing upgrades, there is an additional \$3.774 million allocated for public housing in my electorate. That is on top of the \$5.5 million that was spent in the last term. There is a significant need for upgrade work in my electorate, which has been neglected for many years. I thank the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing for the magnificent work that the department is undertaking in my suburbs, particularly in Zillmere. The suburb has been

transformed from an older Housing Commission suburb to one which is now looking bright and new. That is reflected in the attitude of the tenants and the residents. We thank the minister for that.

Mr Schwarten: What about our old mate; how's he doing?

Mr NEIL ROBERTS: Jim Freilich from the Residents Action Group of Zillmere, or RAGZ, is doing well and is still strongly pushing public housing issues.

I have a couple of brief issues in relation to jobs. DOME, or Don't Overlook Mature Experience, is an organisation in my electorate which looks after mature aged people, giving them assistance to move into employment. It has recently received a \$30,000 grant from the Department of Employment and Training to continue with its good work. There is also a Community Jobs Plan which is currently under way at Nudgee Beach. An amount of \$85,635 was allocated for beautification works which are currently under way. That has been jointly funded with the Brisbane City Council.

I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of my speech in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

ARNOTTS BISCUIT FACTORY—VIRGINIA

Another significant issue affecting my electorate was the recent decision of Arnotts Biscuit Factory at Virginia to expand its operations in Queensland. With the support of the Minister for State Development and the Minister for Employment and Training Arnotts is embarking on a major expansion which will see the creation of an additional 135 full-time jobs over the next couple of years. I am particularly pleased that a major focus in the recruitment of people for these additional jobs will be on the long-term unemployed.

I want to take the opportunity to conclude my speech with some references to the other major bread and butter issues of this budget.

HEALTH ISSUES:

In the health portfolio there is a record budget of \$4.06 billion, as well as \$364 million in capital works projects. This reaffirms the Government's commitment to a quality public health system for all Queenslanders.

\$120 million will be spent over 5 years to help rebuild and redevelop State Government nursing homes. This budget contains \$10M to commence the upgrade process. I will be arguing strongly for improvements under this program to the government's facility at Ashworth House, Zillmere.

\$10M more has been allocated to reduce elective surgery waiting lists and there is an extra \$5M to reduce waiting lists for public dental health services in areas of high demand. \$1.5 million will be spent to expand the current network of Child Health Centres to assist families with young children and an additional \$250,000 is provided to encourage non-smoking behaviour in teenagers.

There is a real focus in the health budget on families and delivering essential health services to those most in need.

EDUCATION ISSUES:

The 2001-02 Budget also delivers a record \$4.3 billion to Education. This is a major increase of 8.9% over last year's allocation. As with the entire budget, this delivers on election commitments and builds on the Beattie Government's 2010 strategy to revitalise State Education across Queensland.

\$50 million is provided over 3 years for the Triple R School Maintenance Program which will repaint, re-roof and renew reticulation systems in the most needy cases across the state.

An extra \$22.8 million is provided for students with disabilities. This includes funding for more teachers and teacher aides, capital works and transport assistance for students. There is an \$18.2 million boost to computer services for students and teachers; and at least 135 additional teachers will be employed in 2001-02 as part of the government's commitment to employ an additional 800 teachers over four years.

The education budget dovetails neatly into the governments vision to create Queensland as the smart state and builds upon the objectives set out in the governments blueprint for the future, the Education Departments 2010 strategy.

POLICE SERVICES:

Major initiatives in the delivery of improved policing services include approximately 300 additional police positions and 60 civilian positions, 6 new Neighbourhood police beats and 4 new Police Beat Shopfronts.

In that regard, I mention again the major upgrades to policing services at the Banyo Police station, thanks to the Beattie Labor government and the tremendous support provided by the local community.

With those few words, I commend the Budget to the parliament. As the Courier Mail stated, this is a budget in which the government has delivered to its heartland. Constituents in the Nudgee electorate have fared well under this budget and I thank the Treasurer and the government on their behalf.

Hon. K. R. LINGARD (Beaudesert—NPA) (4.00 p.m.): One of the groups that has been most controversial in the area of Beaudesert has been the Beaudesert Bus Action Committee, which has continued to call for seatbelts to be installed on buses and for the prevention of students standing on school buses. This is an issue that some of us face as members of parliament whenever we get a controversial area.

I certainly have a very controversial area in my electorate. It is a 30-kilometre stretch of road between Jimboomba and Beaudesert where school buses travel. One of the types of buses that

travels that road is a banana bus, which has two sections. It can carry up to 120 students, with 80 seated and about 40 standing. It can be quite a frightening sight to see 40 students standing in a school bus travelling at 100 kilometres per hour down a main highway which also carries many, many large vehicles. It is that problem which has activated this school Bus Action Committee. There have been minor incidents, and of course the Bus Action Committee is very concerned that a major incident will occur. Initially we should be aiming to have all students seated on school buses, especially when those school buses travel on open highways.

We have attempted to have such a policy put in place, but it has been impossible to work with the Minister for Transport to even try to have any concessions made towards school students being seated on buses travelling on main highways. I believe that once we get that, then we can start to move towards installing seatbelts. As people would realise, before the last election the coalition promised that \$22 million would be allocated towards starting to install seatbelts on school buses. Of course that was ridiculed by the government—a government which stated that it would cost over \$500 million to implement seatbelts on school buses. If we started today and tried to install seatbelts on all school buses tomorrow, I doubt whether we could even do it for \$500 million. However, that is not the idea. The attitude is that sooner or later we are going to have to accept that in modern society all students travelling on school buses on open highways, where buses travel at 100 kilometres per hour, should at least be seated and, secondly, that seatbelts should be provided.

As we know, a policy has been commenced providing that students travelling in buses in mountainous and hilly areas, especially around places such as Mount Tamborine, are required to be seated, and that is an excellent policy. Certainly other decisions can be made. We have been saying to the Minister for Transport that surely in areas such as the single-lane highway between Jimboomba and Beaudesert, where it is nearly impossible to pass any vehicles at any time, all students should be seated on those buses. That is what this group has been fighting for. I commend people like Kim Bax and Kim Limberg, who really have been the main activists.

We know that the day before the last state election the government announced that a certain task force would be set up under Dr Cherrell Hirst. However, we believe now that that task force has been superseded by a report from the Australian Transport Council's draft national bus action plan, which was released last week. This plan has been endorsed by state and federal transport ministers. An article that appeared in the *Beaudesert Times* states—

... the Austroads report recommends safer buses, safer bus stops, more involvement of parents and teachers and the introduction of a national school bus safety action plan.

It aims to reduce the number of fatalities involving school children travelling to and from school to zero.

The difficulty is that absolutely nothing in relation to this issue has been allowed for in this particular budget. So it is quite obvious that, whilst this task force will report in September, this government is already saying that there is going to be no more action towards resolving the problem which is occurring. This problem is not just occurring in Beaudesert. I know that the member for Fitzroy and other members have had difficulties, and people generally have a difficulty as soon as there is a crash or some other problem.

Even the Premier is answering letters now by saying that they are more concerned with the stop-off areas and the bus stops than they are with what is happening on the buses. Mr Bredhauer is continually saying that school bus travel is essentially safe and that students are more at risk around school buses. He says in a press release—

'This is particularly so when students are boarding or alighting school buses,' he said.

The Austroads report concludes that most road casualties involving children commuting to and from school by bus occur outside the bus.

It also reported that over three years of national data, two out of 24 child fatalities associated with school buses were passengers in buses involved in a crash.

I do not believe those figures are good enough for this government to turn around and say, 'We will provide absolutely nothing in the budget. We will now concentrate on bus stops. We will not concentrate at all on anything to do with seatbelts or anything to do with trying to stop the problem of students standing on buses.'

I know the government was faced with a difficulty. It was hard to make a bland statement and say, 'We will remove all students standing in school buses,' because of the opening of the new busway along the South East Freeway. If it said, 'There will be no students travelling on any school bus,' it would have really had difficulties. I appreciated that particular problem. But that is why I am saying that with respect to specific areas which would be regarded as dangerous areas,

such as mountainous areas, the government should say, 'This is an area where we will fund extra money to make sure students are not standing on a bus.' Surely any member who has an area like mine in their electorate where buses and trucks travel on a highway which has a 100 kilometre per hour speed limit would say, 'That is a very, very dangerous area and that is an area where you should bring in a specific rule.'

The minister did start a trial in the Park Ridge area. He said that in that area all buses would travel at 80 kilometres per hour. Of course that is difficult, especially when massive trucks travel down the highway and the school bus is travelling at only 80 kilometres per hour and especially when it is a particularly hilly area. As the bus drivers would say, you cannot keep up 80 kilometres per hour travelling up the hills. So they would be dropping down to 60 kilometres per hour and lower and they have trucks and vehicles behind them. That is all right on a four-lane highway, but it is difficult on a single-lane highway.

That policy also says that the minister would not allow students to travel when they are standing for more than 18 kilometres. That cut-off point was decided because I had an instance in my electorate where the school bus travels for 20 kilometres. Of course, there is the ridiculous situation in that that policy does not apply to a school bus travelling only 17 kilometres. I say to the minister and to the government that making students travel on that sort of a highway standing up for 17 kilometres is absolutely ridiculous.

There are a few other points that I would like to quickly refer to in terms of education. As I travel around the schools I am quite impressed with what is happening with the key learning areas and the new basics. However, the government is going to have a particular problem very soon if it is not careful with workplace health and safety regulations for teachers. As all of these students are being retained in years 10, 11 and 12, who would not be regarded as academic students, who are now doing more basic-type subjects and more subjects which are aimed at getting them out into the work force, there is a need to change the curriculums in the schools. There is a need also to adapt and make sure that there are variable morning tea hours and lunch hours so that sometimes students can travel to another school to experience their programs. If the government continues to adopt the policy of not upsetting the Teachers Union by refusing to vary work hours and lunch hours, it is going to find it considerably difficult to implement many of these programs.

As I go around to the schools I find that most of the teachers in the schools are accepting the need for key learning areas and the new basics. They are accepting the need to change their curriculum and to bring in specialist teachers, but they have problems in changing their curriculums which become so tight that they would like to have an extra hour at the end of the day, more common lunch hours or shorter lunch hours so that they can fit in their curriculums. The other thing that is clearly happening in schools now that they have moved away from corporal punishment—and I was a great advocate of corporal punishment as a high school principal—

Mr Mackenroth: You loved it.

Mr LINGARD: Yes, I loved it.

Mr Schwarten interjected.

Mr LINGARD: The members opposite all start to scream but, as I have always said, I had Queensland's largest high school and I did not have a mark on a desk or a chair, I did not have a cigarette in the school and I did not have one piece of paper littering the school grounds.

Mr Schwarten interjected.

Mr LINGARD: Here goes the member for Rockhampton. The member for Rockhampton reckons that all the marks were on the kids.

Mr Schwarten: You used to flog them.

Mr LINGARD: We had very strong discipline. The new regulations with regard to suspension mean that students are running around the streets. These regulations do nothing at all—

Mr Schwarten: You were like that on the football field.

Mr LINGARD: There was one bloke I could not catch at Fitzroys, and that was the member opposite. He was hopeless as a footballer.

Mr SCHWARTEN: I rise to a point of order. I never, ever played Rugby League for Fitzroys in Rockhampton. It just shows what a liar the honourable member is.

Mr LINGARD: As I said, I could not coach him at all.

Mr Schwarten: I wasn't in the team. I wasn't there.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Male): Order!

Mr Schwarten interjected.

Mr LINGARD: The member opposite certainly did not play for Fitzroys using that sort of language.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rockhampton will come to order.

Mr LINGARD: One thing that happens in this House is that the member opposite gets away with murder as far as his foul mouth is concerned.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Beaudesert will direct his comments through the chair.

Mr LINGARD: He uses language like that, language for which he has not been pulled up by the Deputy Speaker.

There are suspension programs in schools and students going out on suspension but hardly any programs for the rehabilitation of those students. There is a massive problem in our schools at present with the number of students who are not attending high school because they are suspended. The teachers and principals know there is a problem, but nothing can be done. It is up to this government to start to look at programs for those students on suspension. Students on suspension have to attend specific programs which will assist them in their academic career and assist them in their discipline and control. At this stage, this government is not looking at that at all.

Another problem relates to the P&C associations. I want to read into *Hansard* a letter I received from a small school—

... with an enrolment of 27 students from 18 families.

I wish to bring to your attention a problem not only we are facing but all other P&C Associations as well. This being the increase in the public liability insurance cover that the Associations must pay each year.

Last year our premium was \$76.14. This year it has increased to \$239.67 plus G.S.T. costs. This is a significant increase, approximately 150%.

Without the P&C's Public Liability Insurance, volunteers that help in so many areas could not be used. Ultimately our students will suffer ... By reassuring some form of core funding from the Government to cover increasing liability costs, it will alleviate financial burdens on the P&C Associations and enable us to continue to provide essential volunteers for our children's future.

Another problem with the education system that needs to be looked at soon is an issue that received some media coverage the other night. It is completely ridiculous for university students to do what they felt they had to do at the Queensland University campus at Pinjarra Hills. I remind members of the Ted Brown report, which states—

The Adams Working Party recommended that Veterinary Science should remain at its present major locations at St Lucia and Pinjarra Hills. This view was endorsed by the overwhelming majority ... of those who addressed the matter in submissions or with whom it was discussed. This view is endorsed on both academic and pragmatic grounds.

That is not completely true despite the finding of that report. There is certainly dissension as to what should happen at Pinjarra Hills. As we saw on TV the other night, because those university students reacted to this decision by protesting, the government has to look at resolving that problem as quickly as it can.

I turn to employment and training, because there are massive problems with traineeship programs. This state's economy is tipped to grow by four per cent in 2001-02. Its employment growth is two per cent whilst the unemployment rate is eight per cent, which is despite a four per cent growth rate, and the state government is ruling out any labour market reform. If it is still running with an unemployment level of eight per cent—and some reports say nine per cent—and a youth unemployment program of 31 per cent, there is no use sitting here and saying that there are magnificent programs in place. There is no use continuing to allow Minister Foley to stand up and talk about these magnificent programs if unemployment is still at nine per cent and youth unemployment is still at 31 per cent. Something is going wrong, despite spending massive amounts of money.

As anyone who knows anything about the traineeship program knows, there is a lot of skulduggery going on. Many companies are making a lot of money out of traineeship programs but not placing people into employment. There is no use talking about these great programs if only initial training is provided whilst the company reaps massive returns but there is no return at the end for the person involved in the traineeship. The budget talks about a Community Jobs Plan and the Community Employment Assistance Program. It says that these programs will

create job placements for the long-term unemployed for up to six months. What happens to these people at the end of six months? Is this yet another bandaid? To all those members opposite who say that these are great programs, I say: do not forget what is happening to these people at the end of the six months. Many people do not get employment at the end of the six months and therefore really the program is a waste of money.

The budget also says that the Training and Employment Act 2000 introduces multiple improvements based on the findings of the 1999 independent investigation into the quality of training in Queensland's trainee system. However, this is clearly not working. There are concerns in industry and in Canberra regarding the quality of some RTOs—registered training organisations. Members of parliament continually receive reports about those RTOs that are not doing the correct thing. We continually receive reports that the people involved in the RTO schemes are not visiting students and giving them the training programs that the students need. All the money in the world does not make a difference if TAFE colleges are not financially friendly to those people who need to access those programs or if the TAFE campus does not listen to the needs of the community and provide programs which suit the needs of their community, because the cost of many TAFE courses prevents many young people from accessing them.

There is money in this budget for the Browns Plains TAFE. That is excellent as far as the capital improvement to Browns Plains TAFE is concerned. As the member for Logan knows, there has been a problem with students accessing the Browns Plains TAFE. For students at Park Ridge High School, which is located within the electorate of the member for Logan, and students in Beaudesert it is all right if they want to come straight up the highway in order to get to Browns Plains TAFE. However, if they are not immediately on the highway but have to access that particular campus, it is impossible. Somehow in these TAFE training programs something has to be provided for young students in terms of the cost of travel to these campuses. If nothing is done about this, we are providing capital improvements to the Browns Plains TAFE but students cannot access them.

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships are a brilliant option, particularly for non-academic students who want a trade. The Beattie government's commitment to continue to increase school-based apprenticeships and traineeships is commendable. However, funding for schools to employ staff to implement, administer and maintain such a program is an absolute must. We should ask Minister Foley and his department to show us the end results of these traineeship programs. If, as people say, companies are reaping millions of dollars—and they talk in the millions—because they are providing the training part of the program but not worrying about the end result, then there is a difficulty.

Traineeships are a great way for the young or unskilled to gain training and 12 months employment. However, there are alarm bells. Trainees who have completed their traineeship but whose employers choose to terminate their employment are in real trouble. School-based and full-time traineeships are a great initiative for young people, and I commend the minister for what is being done in this area. A program allowing students to join the work force one day a week is excellent. We should be pushing more and more schools to become more vocationally oriented rather than academically oriented, which was the situation 10 or 15 years ago.

I will make a quick comment about Lang Park. I believe that this government is going to fall into a great lot of trouble if it continues to ensure that the Public Accounts Committee and the Public Works Committee do not investigate this project. It is ridiculous. I see the former chairman of the Public Works Committee sitting at the back of the chamber. It is ridiculous for members of the Public Works Committee to go up and look at the Normanton Bridge, which was built a long time ago, when there are projects such as Lang Park and the footbridge which this Public Works Committee does not investigate. Neither the Public Works Committee nor the Public Accounts Committee is going to investigate.

Mr Mackenroth interjected.

Mr LINGARD: The Treasurer just wants me to say something so the parliament can refer me to the ethics committee again in order to keep me quiet. I have no doubt that the ethics committee—

Time expired.

Mr FENLON (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.20 p.m.): It is a pleasure to rise to speak in support of the appropriation bills for the 2001-02 Queensland budget. I congratulate the Treasurer on his great effort in bringing this budget to the House. The budget obviously reflects the breadth and depth of experience the Treasurer has in this parliament and in the public affairs of this state. It is

also great to see a Treasurer representing an electorate covering the wonderful southern suburbs of Brisbane. I know that he has great empathy for those suburbs as well as for the rest of the state.

Mr Mackenroth: There have been only three members from Chatsworth. Two of them have been Treasurer.

Mr FENLON: That is a very fine record indeed.

The southern suburbs we represent pride themselves on a very good quality of life. There are certain issues that are important to them in that sense. These are suburbs which are densely populated. My electorate and the electorate of the member for Stafford tend to have the highest numbers enrolled for the square kilometre area. They are suburbs in which people come to live to enjoy the range of services offered and the close proximity to the city.

Issues such as education and housing, police and care of our seniors are important issues. Overlaying those issues are concerns that all parents today have, especially in terms of drugs and public safety and security. These are matters that are very dear to the residents of our electorates. I promised at the last state election that this government would show vision in pursuing the quality of life that the electors in those suburbs enjoy and deserve to have enhanced.

Education is an area I pride myself in. We have very good schools in those suburbs—not only very good public schools but also very good private schools. We have a very good range of schools that have great reputations. They are schools which are going from being great to becoming even greater with the injection of funds through this government and this budget.

The enhancement of our secondary schools, in particular through the Secondary Schools Renewal Program, is an achievement that will be attributed to this government for generations to come. It is a long overdue revisitation of what sorts of services high schools need to provide to our communities. This budget starts to put in train the process of renewing and changing those secondary schools in the Greenslopes electorate and bordering areas which are very old, to bring them into a state of preparedness for future generations and to enable them to compete and provide services compatible with and better than their respective private schools. That is something we as a state government should be proud of.

Education spending in the Greenslopes electorate will come to about \$3.9 million this year—largely ongoing spending for future years. Over \$1.8 million will be spent on site development at the Cavendish Road State School.

Ms Stone: A great school.

Mr FENLON: I know that there are many students from electorates represented by other members in this House attending this school. It has a great catchment through electorates such as Mansfield and Mount Gravatt. That school has extremely exciting prospects—

Mr Reeves: Sport.

Mr FENLON: In terms of sport and also in terms of science and kinesthetics, as a development on that site. Coorparoo Secondary College will be spending nearly \$1 million. That is a great school, and not only because my wife teaches there. I have also taught there. It is a school that is going from strength to strength. This school will pride itself on moving further into music and drama specialties and also into multi-entry, multi-pathway education. That is something that is extremely exciting, because we are seeing people at various stages in their lives able to pick up on education that is relevant to them and to continue in the great support network that is provided by that school. This school is understanding in so many ways of the needs of individuals who enter that school's very supportive community.

The Coorparoo State School redevelopment has an allocation of \$530,000—over half a million dollars. That will be spent on new classrooms at the Wolf Park section of the school to prepare that part of the campus with new amenities blocks and the movement of a janitor's shed. That will prepare an entire section of the school for redevelopment. We are going through a consultation phase with the school at the moment. I am hoping that the school will embrace that redevelopment, which will ultimately come to about \$4.5 million. We are in fact rebuilding that school. It is the closest thing to building a new school. The school is 125 years old. It is coming up to its 125th anniversary.

Mr Reeves interjected.

Mr FENLON: It is located on Old Cleveland Road. It is a great school community and this provides the very exciting prospect of having almost a new school—an inner city school which is struggling to cope with increasing enrolments and pressures on amenities, which are becoming quite old now and some of which are breaking down. This is a timely renewal—one which is much welcomed by me and, I believe, the wider community.

The Holland Park High School is also part of the high school renewal program. It also receives about half a million dollars to develop its own specialties. The Camp Hill High School is another exciting school. It is on the border of my electorate and that of the Treasurer, the member for Chatsworth.

Mr Mackenroth: It's not on the border. The boundary goes straight through the school.

Mr FENLON: It is literally on the border, because the border does run through the school. I have the ovals and the Treasurer has some of the main school buildings.

Mr Mickel: Does he look after them?

Mr FENLON: He looks after them very well.

Mr Mackenroth interjected.

Mr FENLON: That is correct. Indeed.

The developments that the school is now exploring on that site as part of the redevelopment will bring together the neighbouring Whites Hill Primary School and the high school to develop the very exciting concept of a lower, middle and upper school as an integrated full school campus with its own administrative structure.

The Wellers Hill State School also receives \$180,000 for a building that is part of its ongoing development. The Holland Park State School is to receive \$40,000 for a traffic drop-off area, which is very much needed. I am very pleased about that development, because the situation at the Holland Park State School has been a headache for many years. This is the culmination of a lot of work over many years by the school community, which has brought together various resources in the community to look at ways of solving the real problems that have created headaches around that school for many years—busy streets, narrow streets, parking on streets. It is the classic situation where once every kid rode a bike to school, but now every kid has their mum or dad driving them to school. I know that many members have schools in their electorates with similar problems.

There are not many bus services to that school, either. So I thank the councillor for Holland Park, Kerry Rea, who has worked very closely with me on this. As well, the Brisbane City Council has given an equal commitment of \$40,000 to build that drop-off and pick-up zone, which I think will be located on Abbotsleigh Street within the Greenslopes electorate. That is a great move, which I welcome, and I look forward to working with the school community to implement it.

Housing in this budget totals over \$3.5 million. That is a great support for the public housing needs of our diverse communities. The Greenslopes electorate is diverse geographically in the sense that we have expensive properties on the tops of the hills and less expensive properties at the bottoms of the hills, with a wide range of people of various social and economic backgrounds throughout the community. There is a growing and continuing need for housing in that area. So I thank the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing for his great efforts in responding to the specific requests that I have made over the years to finetune and deal with the matters—

Mr Schwarten: It's a fine city.

Mr FENLON: Indeed, it is a fine city. I am very pleased with the standard of housing in the Greenslopes electorate, but there is an ongoing need for maintenance of that housing. So I look forward to working with the residents to ensure that those standards are maintained.

I am very pleased to see the continuing support and expansion of the Police Service with 300 additional police. I know that the Treasurer shares my views about maintaining our local police stations, especially the Camp Hill station, which we share, as well as ensuring that other stations, such as those at Holland Park and Coorparoo continue—

Mr Mackenroth interjected.

Mr FENLON: I noted that.

Mr Mackenroth: I think that we might bring that out.

Mr FENLON: I will be keeping that letter on file with multiple copies. It is contrary to our views of the world.

We have seen instances of clustering in this state. In our view, it does not work very well. So I will be continuing to fight to maintain a good standard in those police stations to keep them open and servicing the local neighbourhoods. They provide a good service to those local neighbourhoods because the individual police officers have a good working relationship with the communities directly surrounding them. They meet with the Neighbourhood Watch groups, they know them, they work with them, and they look after those communities very well. As far as I am concerned, those police stations will stay there, and I will continue to support them.

I am also pleased to see an extension to the range of persons who are entitled to the Seniors Card. I hope this trend will continue over the years. There are many retired people in our community who sit on the margin of those entitlements with various levels of income, and I am glad to see that extension. I hope that it continues in the future.

The next issue that I wish to mention is health. The health budget is continuing to fund the redevelopment of the Princess Alexandra Hospital, which is the major hospital servicing the south side suburbs, including Greenslopes. Last Saturday I went with my daughter to the Princess Alexandra Hospital open day. It was a great day. There were many faces that I recognised from the Greenslopes electorate. I congratulate the hospital staff on showing the local community through that great new hospital, which will provide a tremendous service to the local communities. Those plans were put in place in the early nineties—following the neglect of previous governments for decades—through an extension of the tobacco tax. We also started the Hospital Rebuilding Program, and those plans are finally coming to fruition. It is great to see that supported within this budget.

The total overall budget figure is indeed a very sound one, with a budget surplus of \$24 million and a cash surplus of \$253 million in this particular instance. In relation to the total budget revenue and expenditure—revenue is expected to increase by 5.5 per cent to \$19.261 billion, and general expenditure is expected to rise by \$3.1 billion to \$19.237 billion. This is going to be supported by sound economic growth and employment growth.

Employment is a very frustrating aspect of our economy. The Treasurer has explained that very well publicly in terms of interstate migration and the other structural factors that influence this state. But it is still fundamental that this budget and this government are addressing the issue of unemployment. If we were to say anything other than that this government has as its fundamental priority that unemployment must be addressed, we would not be doing our job. Unemployment must be our fundamental priority. We must aim to reduce it. All of our resources and all of our policy directions should lead towards the reduction of unemployment. I am pleased to see that, throughout this budget, there is a clear focus on this—a focus which has vision to take Queensland forward, and a focus which addresses the lifestyles of our families and our suburbs in the electorates that we represent. I commend this budget to the House.

Dr WATSON (Moggill—Lib) (4.38 p.m.): I have listened with interest to the superlatives that have been heaped on the Treasurer and his first budget. I must admit that my own evaluation of that probably comes closer to the faint praise from the member for Nudgee, who said it was a solid budget. In my view, a more apt description would have been 'pedestrian'—a pedestrian pedestrian budget—despite the fact that a \$100 million technology infrastructure fund is to be established. That is an appropriate move that should be commended. But we must recognise that even that particular initiative is only about five one-thousandths of a \$20 billion budget and falls far short of what will be required in Queensland and Australia if we are to take our place in a very competitive world in the future.

One of the other things that was indicated in this budget was that this is a budget which showed that the government really was running out of money—something that we talked about before the last election. This budget has provided the fourth cash deficit on a GFS basis. The rating agencies also recognised that there was a deteriorating financial position in this state.

This budget does follow in the line of the previous Beattie Labor government budgets. I heard the Deputy Premier, on either the morning of the budget or the morning before the budget was presented, indicating on the radio that, even though this was his first budget as Treasurer, he had spent six budgets on the Cabinet Budget Review Committee, which certainly covers all the budgets that have been presented by the Beattie government. In many ways, this budget continues the trend that has been established over the previous three budgets of the Beattie Labor government. The hallmarks of that are simply these: we are simply not encouraging business investment, and that is the reason that we are seeing a lack of sufficient job growth in this state and a rise in unemployment. We are simply not putting sufficient money into public infrastructure, and that is clearly demonstrated when you look at the gross fixed capital formation

figures in the budget, and I will go on to those in some detail. In addition, the government is simply not controlling its operating costs, which means that there are insufficient funds available for capital formation.

Let me address some of the figures that are contained in the budget papers. I think they show quite clearly some of the concerns that I have and some of the concerns that the people of Queensland should have for the future. If we look at table 2.2 in *Budget Paper No. 3*, when we are looking at the overall national and state economic trends and forecasts, the first thing that we see is the estimated actual outcomes for 2000-01. When we compare those with the estimates in the previous budget, we can see that in the critical area of private investment, the estimated actual outcomes are significantly worse than what was predicted this time last year. When we look at private investment, there was an estimated fall of 13 per cent from the previous year, whereas the budget predicted a fall of only four per cent. When it comes to dwellings, the budget predicted a fall of 4.5 per cent; the actual outcome was 19.25 per cent. Business investment was predicted to fall 5.75 per cent; the actual outcome was 14.5 per cent. Other buildings and structures were predicted to fall 0.75 per cent; it fell 16.25 per cent. Machinery and equipment, which is a leading indicator of whether or not businesses are actually investing for job creation, was predicted to fall 8.25 per cent in last year's budget, and in fact the outcome looks like a fall of 13.5 per cent. So when one sees that the actual outcomes from the key indicators of business investment for the last budget were significantly worse than that which was forecast, one does not have a lot of confidence in the relatively small forecasted increases in those areas in this year's budget.

The fact of the matter is that business investment peaked in Queensland in December 1998. It peaked at about \$1.92 billion, if I remember correctly, for the quarter. It has been going down since then. Even the increase that is predicted for this coming financial year is now therefore going off a much smaller base than that which was true for this government when it took over in 1998, which was the foundation for some of the previous budgets.

So the first table in that budget paper does not fill one with confidence when one looks at the actual outcomes for the last budget period and the predicted very small increases in the critical area of business investment in this year's budget. Of course, there is little wonder for that, because one of the hallmarks of the Beattie government has been a consistent discrimination when it comes to business and business investment. What this government has done over the past three years is increase the uncertainty associated with business and therefore business investment. If we increase the uncertainty that business has with what government decisions are, then we will automatically drive lower the business investment in this state.

Let us look at the individual actions that this government has undertaken. I will just go over them briefly, because we have looked at them on previous occasions, and nothing in this budget has altered them. Let us look at payroll tax. Again, the government wants to trumpet a slight fall in the payroll tax rate, and it has been falling—from five per cent to 4.9 per cent to 4.8 per cent and 4.75 per cent next year. But at the same time, of course, the base has been changed so that we are including the compulsory superannuation payments in the base on which payroll tax is calculated. That has gone up by seven per cent to eight per cent and, next year, nine per cent. So the effective payroll tax rate, if we calculated what it would have been if the base had always included superannuation, was in the first year before the decrease 5.35 per cent. Even when we get it down to 4.75 per cent in terms of the payroll tax rate, the effective rate, because we have increased the scope of the base by nine per cent, is about 5.18 per cent.

So over the period, this government, by increasing the base on which payroll tax is calculated, has effectively raised the payroll tax by 0.2 of one per cent, and that is when it gets down to 4.75 per cent. So that is why businesses are saying that the budget is not business friendly. You are not going to encourage increases in employment when what you are doing in the budget process is effectively increasing payroll tax, the tax on employment.

It does not stop there. We have seen this government increase workers compensation insurance. Again, in the last budget and this one, there has been a slight decrease, but it has come only after a massive increase in the first year. That is the problem. The effective workers compensation insurance costs today are greater than when the Beattie government first won office.

When it comes to areas like industrial relations, the movement of this government has been against flexibility in the industrial relations area and it has been against encouraging business investment. A perfect example is the very long debate we had when this parliament changed the industrial relations laws in the coalmining area to make sure that there was, in essence, a union representative on open-cut mines operating in the same capacity as they did in longwall

coalmining by using the subterfuge of health and safety officers. What the government did in the mining industry was effectively raise the costs of open-cut mining.

But it has not stopped there when you talk about the mining industry in this state. On issues such as native title, which are so important, this government failed to get its federal colleagues to go along with the legislation which has been passed by this House and was supported by the opposition and the mining industry. That is one of the reasons the mining industry is suffering problems today.

I refer to QR and third-party access, which is another important issue. Under the competition policy, that has the ability to reduce the costs of the coal industry to make it more competitive on an international basis. When it comes to QR doing anything about it, the government drags its feet. Three years ago we established the Queensland Competition Authority. Three years later, QR has failed to allow any third-party access to its lines. It is still delaying that. Just last month Ross Willims—and many members probably do not recall but he was a director-general in the Goss Labor government—from BHP Coal was complaining about the fact that QR and this government had not moved on third-party access. While QR and the government does not move on that, the costs to the mining industry are kept up, it is less competitive and, therefore, fewer jobs are created.

Again, in relation to the mining industry, the government has placed an arbitrary 15 per cent gas requirement for electricity generation. There is no substantive economic justification for that figure; it is just an arbitrary 15 per cent, which will raise the cost of generating electricity for consumers and for businesses in this state.

What has the government done recently? Whether the government likes it or not, it has increased uncertainty in the hotel industry by making an arbitrary 10 per cent and 20 per cent increase in the taxation—

A government member interjected.

Dr WATSON: No, I am just talking about what the government is doing to—

Mr Fouras interjected.

Dr WATSON: The government is increasing the uncertainty to business. Businesses invested, and after they invested the government raised the taxes by a significant amount on a small proportion of the hotel industry. That sends a signal to all businesses that, in terms of the government's taxation policies, it cannot be trusted. The government has done that in relation to payroll tax, it did it in terms of workers compensation and now it has done it in terms of the hotel industry. There is a pattern right across the three or four years the members opposite have been in government.

Mr Quinn: Serial offenders.

Dr WATSON: As the member for Robina says, they are serial offenders. They have done it again in this budget. In this Treasurer's first budget, he has forecast that the government is yet again going to change coal royalties. No wonder business is saying, 'You can't trust the government.' We cannot be sure that the taxation regimes we see today are going to be the regimes tomorrow. Whenever the government believes that it needs a bit of money, it hits special interest parts of business. That increases the uncertainty and that reduces the incentive for business to invest. Of course, that means the incentive for business to hire people is reduced.

But the government is not only destroying the incentive for business to invest but also continuing to reduce the amount that it is spending on public infrastructure. That can be seen at table 2.4 in *Budget Paper No. 2* and also at table A.3 headed 'State Non-PFE GFS Net Operating Result'. Members can see quite clearly in those and related tables that the amount of money that we are putting towards gross fixed capital formation is falling. It has fallen in every budget that this government has brought down. In this budget, it is something like \$600 million in the general government area less than what it was in 1999-2000. Not only that, it is projected to continue to decrease right through the projection period extending to 2004-05. That is occurring not only in the general government sector but also in the public trading enterprise sector.

So the government is creating a double whammy. It is discouraging business investment by changing things like taxation regimes but it is also discouraging business investment by not providing the appropriate public infrastructure required for businesses to be efficient and to get the most out of their investments. Under those circumstances it is no wonder that we are seeing a decrease in the standard of living of the general population in this state and a decrease in business incentive to invest in this state and to employ people.

One of the ways the government is doing this is by simply letting the day-to-day running costs of government get out of control. I notice that the government has changed the information that is given in the budget. It no longer provides budget figures in terms of generally accepted accounting standards; we have only the GFS figures. That is fine if we are comparing Queensland with other states, but as anyone who has been in business would know, financial accounting statements are prepared for one year and the next year and they are prepared on the basis of generally accepted accounting principles. One would expect that, in looking at the budget papers, we would have those figures for one year followed by next year's figure. But we cannot do that with these budget papers because the government has cut that out.

That reduces the amount of accountability in the system. But most importantly, it helps to hide the effects on operating costs. I did a quick calculation using table A.1 in *Budget Paper No. 2*. I looked at the general cost of running the government, which is provided in the general government GFS net operating results. If members look at the gross operating expenditure as a proportion of revenue, then look at the 1999-2000 figure, then look at the figure it is for this budget, and then look at the figure it is for the projected period 2004-05, they will see that the gross operating expenses are going to rise over that period, as against revenue, by between 10 per cent and 14 per cent. So the growth in gross operating expenses is outpacing the growth in revenue over the period as outlined in the budget papers—from now to 2004-05.

The government cannot continue to do that. If the government allows its gross operating expenses to outpace its revenue, it has a problem. Of course, the problem shows up in the fact that the government has less money to put into capital formation. So the fact that the government is not controlling its expenses means that it is simply not putting as much money into public infrastructure. That compounds the issues I talked about earlier.

This budget keeps the tradition of the Beattie Labor government. It shows the continual deterioration of the financial position of this state. It is one that says that, if we keep going like this, we are going to reduce the living standards of Queenslanders and we are going to be subjected to continually high unemployment and lack of jobs.

Mr MICKEL (Logan—ALP) (5.00 p.m.): This budget has provided the basics for Queenslanders whilst, at the same time, creating a business environment that encourages business to remain in and relocate to Queensland. The budget has been framed against a backdrop where business is trying to recover from the buffeting it has received over the past 12 months. The introduction of the GST has affected businesses in various ways. The bring-forward of activity knocked around the construction industry. It has had a profound impact on the retail industry. In addition, business has had to contend with a high real interest rate environment.

This budget is the fourth in a row to provide direct and indirect incentives for private sector growth, new investment and, importantly, for private sector training and employment growth in urban, regional and rural Queensland. These are welcome initiatives. They come from a government that has worked hard to strengthen business and investment confidence, recognising, as it does, that the engine-room for growth and job creation in our great state must be the private sector.

In recent weeks, the image of the Australian business community has taken a real hammering. Sadly, the criminal, negligent, extravagant and greedy behaviour of a minority of corporate directors and managers has blackened the name of the private sector and particular areas of the private sector, notably insurance, telecommunications and airlines.

The great majority of Australian and Queensland businesses deserve high praise for weathering the massive impact of the GST, the BAS and the economic downturn we did not need to have. These are very tough times for many businesses, large and small. They are also tough times for many employees, not to mention former employees. This budget shows just how widespread and how massive the impact of corporate mismanagement is.

The taxpayers and motorists of Queensland have to bear the burden of the impact of the HIH Insurance collapse, a \$230 million burden for Queensland that will be added to at the federal level and repeated in other states. Over the last 20 years or so, there has been a headlong rush to require the states to hand over to the Commonwealth just about all powers of corporate governance and supervision. Not only is Corporations Law now a national law, so is the regulation and monitoring of individual sectors that were once state responsibilities, such as insurance.

The question that needs to be asked, in view of the HIH and One Tel failures in particular, is whether the concentration of regulatory authority in the hands of the federal government has been in the public interest. The expansion of national corporate activity and international

corporate activity undoubtedly made the concentration of law and supervision in national authorities necessary. But has it strengthened regulation and supervision? Has it been in the interests of the consumer, the investor and the employee? Let me deal with the HIH Insurance collapse to answer those questions.

The HIH collapse is potentially not only the largest in our corporate history, it is also likely to have the most adverse impact on the greatest number of innocent, decent men, women and families in our history. Indeed, this one collapse will impact on every family and every business, because higher insurance premiums will be the biggest fallout from the HIH collapse.

As our second or third largest insurance company, HIH was supposed to be supervised by two well-funded, well-resourced national bodies: the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, and the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority. Those massive entities carry out important duties on behalf of consumers, investors and the whole community. They are extremely well funded by the taxpayers of Australia. Their existence, their powers and the resources that they have at their disposal raise an important question: how could those regulators not have been aware that a large insurance company, HIH, was in grave financial trouble? It defies comprehension that those bodies were not aware of HIH's problems in view of the extent of the losses it has incurred, which are in the region of \$4 billion. That is one-fifth of the total budget that we are debating today. Four billion dollars is more than the total budget of Tasmania and three times the largest city budget in Australia, that of the Brisbane City Council.

The states have surrendered responsibility for a whole range of areas in the cause of uniform law, better corporate supervision and governance. The bodies that now hold all the powers that the states surrendered, and more, have a lot to answer for, especially when it comes to massive corporate crashes such as HIH and One Tel. The states and our citizens have to pick up the cost for those corporate crashes and for the apparent failure of the regulatory authorities to detect gross mismanagement, waste and extravagance, and even corporate fraud before it was far too late.

We cannot turn the clock back and revert to the state regulation of companies and state administration of corporate law. But the states, on behalf of the people, are entitled to demand that, hand-in-hand with the commission of inquiry into the HIH collapse, there is an independent review of the performance of the two regulatory authorities, ASIC and APRA, in these and other areas.

That brings me to the main point I want to make with regard to the importance of the private sector to Queensland's growth and the government's contribution to the strength and growth of the private sector. It is vital that public confidence in the private sector, and especially big business, be restored. Let there be no doubt about it: recent corporate collapses and public exposure of the extreme extravagance of directors and managers has badly damaged public confidence in business. There is an urgent need for industry and business associations, for the private sector itself and for governments to work together to rebuild that confidence. The initiative must come from the private sector itself and, sadly, it always falls on those who are doing the right thing.

Only this week we have seen another corporate collapse that has given business the worst possible image. The overnight closure of Flight West Airlines has cost more than 400 Queenslanders their jobs and put vital communication links to dozens of regional and rural centres alike at real risk. The owners of Flight West, the Buchanan family, have 'form' when it comes to company closures overnight. About eight years ago, another Buchanan airline, Talair, closed down its air services in Papua New Guinea overnight, creating massive hardship for rural and regional communities in a nation where air services are even more important than they are in Australia.

Flight West has been in a unique position in the Australian aviation industry as a result of the \$3 million-plus subsidy that the Queensland government gave it to maintain regional services. Apparently, that counted for nothing when the airline was closed down at midnight on Monday without the government of this state being given the courtesy of a prior warning.

There needs to be a new commitment to corporate responsibility and integrity in the private sector, and in large public corporations in particular. There must be a corporate sector driven commitment to ending the payment of obscene bonuses and discount or free share issues to the directors of non-performing or under-performing companies. The multimillion-dollar bonuses paid to directors of One Tel should not have to be an issue; they should never have been paid in the first place.

Corporate responsibility and integrity also demand greater transparency in arrangements between corporations and their auditors. The links between company boards and accountants who have served as their auditors, directly or indirectly, must be re-examined. While the HIH collapse brings into serious question the performance of directors and managers, it also raises issues about the performance and independence of auditors. These issues must be addressed by the corporate sector and by the audit industry itself. A new commitment to corporate integrity and accountability cannot come from tougher laws or more effective regulation alone; it must also come from a greater sense of the responsibilities that go with corporate management.

The great majority of corporate directors and managers behave responsibly, work hard, and contribute to a stronger and better nation and community. The task for the corporate sector is to help weed out those who do not measure up and who drag the whole name of the corporate sector down. It is a task on which governments need to work with the private sector to achieve, and media can help by highlighting corporate success and innovation, and personal achievement, as well as the activities of corporate rogues.

I want to make some comments about the true position of federal-state financial relationships today. When the GST was introduced, we were told that the states would have more to spend and that the Commonwealth would be slashing its tax take to 'compensate' the people of Australia for the impact of the GST on goods and services. The truth is that the Howard government is the biggest spending, biggest taxing government in Australia's history. In the five years of the Howard government, federal revenue as a percentage of GDP has risen to a record 37.7 per cent. When Labor left office in 1996, it was 32.3 per cent.

The spending side gives the same story. In the recent federal budget, total government outlays as a share of GDP rose to 37 per cent, a figure that is without precedent in the 40 years of federal budget history compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. While Queensland has one of the lowest taxing governments in Australia and the lowest taxes on business in particular, Australia has the highest taxing federal government in its history. If members want to know why Queensland businesses are doing it tough, they should point to where the blame lies: it lies with the federal government in Canberra, which is the highest taxing government in Australia's history.

The Howard government tax reforms were also supposed to herald in a 'new era' in federalism, one giving the state more resources than ever to provide basic services. All that has happened is that the states are more dependent than ever on Canberra for funding. The GST revenue sharing arrangements do not enhance state financial independence at all. They make the states more dependent than ever on federal funding, and nowhere is that more evident than with regard to the funding of schools, hospitals and health services, and roads. Australia has a big taxing and big spending federal government while Queensland has a low taxing government, carefully managing scarce spending resources.

I believe that the growing dependence of the states on the federal government for funding is unhealthy and contrary to the principles of the federal system we are supposed to follow. It reduces the capacity of state governments, especially state governments such as ours where population growth and economic activity are strongest, to fund and provide services and to determine their own priorities. If this is the best that 'new federalism' has to offer, then we need to question its relevance and its suitability to Australia today, its adverse impact on our state and our capacity to deliver services and promote sound economic development for the good of the people of Queensland.

The other test that the federal government demanded of the Labor Party was that it produce alternative policies to the budget. To his credit, Kim Beazley did just that. But what did we hear today from the opposition—the one led by the honourable member for Toowoomba South? Did we hear any alternative policies? Did we hear that it was going to fund that higher capital spending? Did we hear that it was going to do anything about taxation? Not a thing! So it failed the test in this House today that it demanded of us federally.

The simple proposition is this: if the members opposite want more money spent on capital works—and they say they do—then what are they going to cut back on or what taxes are they going to increase? That is the test of real leadership. They demanded that of us federally; we delivered it federally. We are demanding that of the opposition at the state level today. If they have a complaint with the budget, they should tell us their alternative and tell us how they will fund it. On those few happy notes, I seek leave for the rest of my speech to be incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The opposition in this place has simply come up with more spending proposals. It has complained of the levy to finance the HIH disaster. It complains of the funding stream needed to fund major sporting and cultural facilities.

It wants more spent on Capital Works. Yet, it does not want to do the hard work. It will not outline what it will cut back to fund a higher capital works program. It is silent on the taxation increases it proposes to introduce to fund the complaints that each Shadow Minister has of the Budget.

That's the hard work, and the Opposition has squibbed it.

Let me deal with the initiatives in this Budget which directly benefit Logan and North Beaudesert.

The funding for the Stoney Camp Road interchange is welcome. It funds infrastructure to relieve this dangerous intersection. I want to see a start too on the Middle Road to Green Road section of the Mt Lindesay Highway. I know the acquisitions have taken time, but it is time that this project went ahead.

The Browns Plains Police Station has received funding for completion of the upgrade. This means that 4 officers from the Juvenile Aid Bureau can be located in Logan West.

Funding has also been approved for the Logan West Ambulance Station. These dedicated officers service a fast growing area which has too major roadways. An enlarged station is needed to house extra vehicles.

I welcomed the visit of Emergency Services Minister, Mike Reynolds, who visited the Station and the nearby Logan West Fire Station and was able to approve funding for some essentials at the Station.

The good news for Logan West is the approved funding for the Logan West campus of Logan TAFE. This facility will be located in Grand Plaza Drive and will be accessed by students in Logan West, the Marsden area, Brisbane South and North Beaudesert. The ability to obtain and retain long term employment is enhanced with attaining of extra qualifications.

The Logan West flexi-learning facility makes a valuable contribution as does Clubs Queensland Training through the Greenbank RSL. In addition, the Community Jobs Plan has been enthusiastically taken up by the Southside Community Church and the Logan West Employment Group who have provided job opportunities for long-term unemployed and has significantly improved community and sporting facilities in Logan West.

I look forward to the introduction of the Triple-R School maintenance program—whilst the Beattie Government and the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Education have been diligent in providing funds for local schools—this program is a good one and recognises real needs.

The funding for Crestmead School is especially welcomed as the school has undergone significant growth. It is time that a development plan and funding for it was approved for Park Ridge State School, and funding is needed to replace the Infant Toilet Block. I also want to reiterate my call for a music block for Greenbank State School. The Teachers & Parents do a mighty job at that school—because of its location it can get the feeling it is overlooked. I urge the Parliament to take notice of the real concerns of this community.

I also want to acknowledge the funding increase in this Budget for people with disabilities and the funding increase for foster parents.

People with intellectual disabilities can't often articulate their gratitude. They don't ask much of us—they simply ask to be treated with dignity as human beings. The increased funding is another step along the way.

The Budget is back to the basics—it attempts to grapple with the society's problems, at the same time giving incentives to the private sector.

Whilst people want more services, there are few who want more taxes to pay for them. The Treasurer has produced a credible document which deserve support.

Mr ROWELL (Hinchinbrook—NPA) (5.12 p.m.): It is often said that a Treasurer puts his own stamp on a state budget—and I notice that he is not in the chamber. That being the case, it is worth pointing out that, when it comes to primary industries, the stamp of the Beattie government is one that lacks any vision and any commitment to investing in a sector that remains the mainstay of the Queensland economy. I have noted that the Beattie government is very quick to acknowledge the contribution of primary industries, which is projected to increase to \$7.89 billion this financial year. It is very quick to try to claim credit for any increase, despite the fact that in real terms it has progressively reduced the state's funding commitment to the Department of Primary Industries.

While we are looking at \$7.8 billion this next year and well over \$6 billion last year, the Primary Industries budget is \$300 million. Lang Park's budget is also \$300 million. So it is quite clear that the Beattie government regards Lang Park as equally important to an industry that is worth \$7 billion to this state. Perhaps the most amusing example of this has been the Premier's and the Primary Industries Minister's repeated attempts to claim credit for the resurgence of the beef industry. That resurgence is long overdue and has been fuelled by a combination of the low Australian dollar, a drop in supply as a result of disease outbreaks—honourable members can go to other countries to see what mad cow disease and foot-and-mouth disease have done to their herds—in the herds of some of our major competitors and increasing demand on the global beef market.

Prior to leaving government and when I was Minister for Primary Industries, we invited the Chinese and we established the live cattle trade with them. I travelled to China on a private visit and saw exactly what they were doing. I also had some people from the Egyptian government here, too. Yet I note that the Premier went over there and established the beef trade. If we were

to believe the press releases issued by the Premier and the minister, the Beattie government has somehow had something to do with it. These are the same gentlemen who sought to attack the dollar as the cause for the Premier's failure to deliver on the five per cent unemployment target. Unfortunately for them, though, beef producers, meat processors and the public are not quite as naive as the Premier believes.

The Beattie government's 2001-02 state budget is one of missed opportunities. It is a budget that has been described by the Queensland Farmers Federation as flat with little rural industry interest and by Agforce as failing to adequately fund strategic initiatives such as the rehabilitation of the Great Artesian Basin. It is a budget in which, once again, the Beattie government has continued to rip the heart out of the DPI while refusing to invest in new initiatives and the infrastructure that primary industries need. It is a short-sighted budget. It refuses to acknowledge that, by making that investment, Queensland's primary industries will develop further and provide the regional development, increased economic returns and the jobs that this state needs and that the Premier is always so desperate to claim as his own.

This budget also continues what will be the legacy of the Beattie government. The budget papers reveal that another 118 staff have been shed from the DPI since last year's budget. This is in addition to the 279 jobs cut during the previous year and the 137 jobs cut in the 1999-2000 budget, taking the total job losses so far under the Beattie government to 534. And this is from a minister who promised while in opposition that there would be no job losses in DPI under a Labor government! This is from a government that has purported to be a government for all Queenslanders. It is a government for all Queenslanders all right—provided they live in the south-east corner.

Ms Keech: Rubbish!

Mr ROWELL: The member says 'Rubbish!' Let me quote her some figures in relation to what is happening in the south-east corner. Last year the Brisbane statistical area saw \$1.959 billion in expenditure on capital works. It is now getting a return on capital works of \$2.2 billion. That is for next year. In the year 2001-02 the northern statistical division will get \$309 million. In the year 2000-01 it got \$385.2 million—\$76 million more than what the northern division will receive this year, and yet the member says 'Rubbish!' This is from a government which, as I said, purports to be a government for all Queenslanders! It is a government for all Queenslanders, providing they live in the south-east corner. If the member cares to look at the statistical information in the budget, she will see that this is an indisputable fact.

Those job losses are just the tip of the iceberg, as the minister well knows. He knows it, because he refused to answer my questions on notice a couple of weeks ago or to provide the details of these jobs. He claimed that it would take too much effort on the part of his department, yet two of his other colleagues—the Minister for Natural Resources and Minister for Mines, and the Minister for Industrial Relations—saw no problem in providing an answer to exactly the same question.

One of the worst effects of the continuing loss of qualified staff from DPI through sackings, redundancies or those quality staff who leave of their own volition because of their frustration and despair over the management of DPI under the Beattie government is the loss of service to primary producers in rural and regional areas of Queensland. The other serious effect of the loss of staff is the loss of knowledge, corporate expertise and decades of experience from the department. As the steady loss of stock inspectors, agronomists, vets, scientists and extension officers continues, there is a commensurate loss of relevance of the DPI to grassroots primary producers.

The DPI has also suffered a series of budget cuts in recent years. Last year the Beattie government attempted to cover up cuts of more than \$40 million to the research and development institutes established by the Borbidge government to improve the delivery and the relevance of the DPI's R&D work to industry. It did this by amalgamating a number of other government agencies and their budgets within DPI, including the Queensland Fish Management Authority and the Office of Rural Communities, and claiming an overall increase of \$6.9 million. However, the DPI annual report was published some six months later and confirmed what the opposition had discovered, that is, that more than \$40 million had actually been cut from the DPI's core budget.

Of course, there was also the matter of the unbudgeted east coast trawl management plan and the government's decision to make DPI meet the \$10 million contribution to buying out fish licences from within its existing budget. There were no additional funds to cover this amount. Also

last year the Beattie government transferred responsibility for the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority from Treasury to the DPI, in the process seizing some \$57.7 million from its reserves. It is interesting to note that the PIPE scheme, which has always been very beneficial to primary producers, had an increase in its interest rate from six per cent to 7.6 per cent. That is quite a dramatic rise, a rise which was made without notice and without consultation. All of a sudden there was a massive increase in the interest rate which was so important on those long-term loans. The year before another \$26.6 million was cut from the DPI's budget.

The combined effect of these raids on DPI coffers has had a dramatic and deleterious impact on the capacity of DPI to do its job and service the needs of primary industries in Queensland. This year's budgeted spending in DPI will drop to \$299.6 million from an actual spending last year of \$304.3 million. So again the belt is being pulled in and DPI is being asked to do more with less.

One of DPI's most important functions—but it is not the most important function according to this government—is maintaining the health status of plants and animals. This is such an important area, and that is not just my view but the view of most farm organisations and probably most producers in this state. The old Animal and Plant Health Service, which has now been rebadged as part of the Market Access and Development Unit, performed a vital and important role in protecting animal and plant health in Queensland. There has been a series of quarantine incursions in recent years which DPI has had to deal with as best it could given the funding pressures imposed on it by the government.

The best chance of controlling and eradicating these pest and disease incursions is to act quickly and decisively. To do that requires a competent and adequately staffed Animal and Plant Health Service and adequate funding to carry out that work when the need arises. So it is with grave concern that I have noted in the budget papers that staffing in the Market Access and Development Unit has been reduced from 554 in 1999-2000 to a budgeted 481 in 2001-02. These cuts fly in the face of the industry's wishes and fly in the face of prudent and best disease management. I will talk more about this issue later.

The budget also fails to address the continuing hardship experienced by the dairy industry in Queensland following the Beattie government's decision to deregulate the industry and the resultant devastating drop in farm gate prices. While the Beattie government was prepared to fund a \$10 million restructure package for commercial fishermen under the east coast trawl plan—even though it did not provide DPI with any more money to do so—no such assistance has been provided to dairy farmers. This is despite the fact that, according to the Treasurer, the Beattie government will receive something like \$134 million in 2001-02 from its commitment to the national competition policy and despite the fact that the Primary Industries Minister abolished farmers' market milk quotas worth hundreds of thousands of dollars to individual farmers without offering any compensation.

The federal government's FarmBis program has been of tremendous assistance and is a great success story. It has allowed primary producers to improve their knowledge and skills base on their business management. I welcome the fact that the state government has agreed to join with the federal government and take up its offer of matching funding to maintain FarmBis for another three years. However, I must voice my concern that no additional grant has been provided in the budget for the state's initial \$5 million contribution. Rather, this money will have to be found through QRAA initially. I question where exactly that funding will be sourced from, because that will cut short other programs.

I turn now to a number of diseases and pests that are giving primary producers in this state great problems. Wild pigs are certainly a major problem. The loss of crops as a result of wild pigs is quite significant. They are also carriers of TB and Japanese encephalitis and can be carriers of the dreaded foot-and-mouth disease should it ever get to Australia. These pests have to be dealt with by the Department of Primary Industries and the Environment Department, because these pests are very destructive and are carriers of major diseases.

Another pest is the flying fox, and the member for Tablelands and I both asked questions about flying foxes. At the present time many farmers depend on the use of electric grids to protect their crops. There was no consultation whatsoever about the use of those grids with the owners, and members should bear in mind that pest mitigation permits have enabled farmers to use electric grids to destroy these pests over the last 10 years. The damage done to crops by flying foxes can be as high as 100 per cent. Many areas of the state are affected by these pests, not just the northern area. Flying foxes are a pest throughout Queensland and are of great concern to many people who have invested millions of dollars to produce fruit crops.

Another pest is the greyback cane grub. A proposal was put to the state government by the BSES for assistance relating to additional staff and subsidies. While it might have appeared from press statements released by the minister that the BSES was given additional staff, that did not occur. Basically, there was some rearrangement with the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations and it was allocated specific staff to deal with the cane grub issue. No funding was provided by way of subsidy on the very costly chemicals that have to be used. There is a major concern with pests.

Crazy ants also have to be dealt with in Cairns. I hope that something is happening. Some deliberations had to take place between the EPA and the Department of Primary Industries. These ants have the ability to undermine crops such as sugarcane in a similar way that funnel ants have. They also carry scale up trees, which is very difficult for anybody growing fruit crops to deal with. Scale is one of the major concerns. It blackens fruit, which leads to a reduction in market value.

Fire ants are a challenging problem for the south-east corner. We certainly do not want to see them spread to anywhere else in the state or to any other states. Quite an enormous effort is being made. Once again, we saw that a nurseryman who could not get compensation from the state government was recognised by the federal government.

Black sigatoka throughout north Queensland is of major concern. We just do not know where we are going with that. The industry is being very vigilant. Black sigatoka is now defolating crops, and that is what has to happen to ensure that the disease does not persist in the crop. It is a costly labour exercise. The industry has also had to be vigilant in the use of fungicide. I know that there are some very rigid spraying programs. The budget mentioned the introduction of DNA testing as an achievement of the government. It may well have been an achievement of this government that it has recognised technology. That testing is extremely important in detecting black sigatoka—to detect it before it gets to a stage whereby the spores can be transmitted readily.

This morning I mentioned nodavirus in barramundi. This is of great concern to the aquaculture industry. It is hoped that in the very near future that industry will be producing something like 3,000 tonnes of barramundi. It is very significant in relation to the export potential of the fish. Many of the aquaculturalists are producing plate-sized barramundi that have a very high value. Barramundi is one of the icons of Queensland. Many people come from around the world to fish for barramundi. I am very concerned that we are not really recognising nodavirus.

Mrs ATTWOOD (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (5.33 p.m.): I am very pleased to show my support for another fair and equitable, back-to-basics Beattie budget. I congratulate the Treasurer, the Honourable Terry Mackenroth, on a job well done. This government has ensured that it has covered all bases. When I walk around my electorate and talk with residents I consistently hear about what is important. The issues that people are concerned about most are families, education, health, law and order, jobs and the environment.

This 2001 budget focuses on all of these important areas and delivers vital services to all Queenslanders. Some of these initiatives in policy commitments include: \$10 million over three years for eight new centres of excellence in mathematics, science and technology; \$50 million over three years for the Triple R maintenance program to improve the appearance of schools and enhance the attractiveness of the learning environment; \$5 million to help 16,500 people waiting the longest for public dental health services and \$20 million over two years to reduce waiting lists for elective surgery; \$20 million over two years to create traineeships for young people, focusing on environmental protection, horticulture and waste management; \$2.8 million over four years to establish 10 additional police beats and police beat shopfronts; and \$40 million over four years for national park maintenance, funding up to 140 new park rangers and the equipment and supplies for them to help maintain our national parks.

During my first term I wanted to open up communications between people and government. I think I have partly achieved this through my program of listening posts, a regular newsletter, distribution of some of my speeches, door knocking, information stalls and community bulletins. I believe that the people of Mount Ommaney know that I am there to represent them and that they can call on me if they need help with their issues.

When I am able to, I take the opportunity to visit the nine schools in my electorate. I need to be satisfied that our children are receiving the best possible education and that facilities meet acceptable standards. The debate on the appropriation bills is an excellent opportunity to talk about the Beattie government's great achievements in the electorate of Mount Ommaney.

Just prior to my first term I made a commitment to provide a community health facility in the Oxley-Corinda-Sherwood area. I am pleased to advise now that the centre was officially opened by the Minister for Health, the Honourable Wendy Edmond, on 6 June this year. The facility will be a great asset to this community and will include services such as one-on-one child health consultations, positive parenting programs, nutrition advice, stress and pain management and medication awareness, open health clinics, community health nursing assessments, a baby health clinic, health education and home care for asthma and diabetes management. Nine staff members, including two qualified nurses, will service a population of 27,000 people living in the immediate area. A meeting room seating 20 will be available for community groups to use after hours. I thank the minister and her staff for their cooperation in allowing this health centre to come to fruition.

The Centenary High School is continuing to progress, with stage 3 construction due to commence in the latter half of this year. This stage will comprise a performing arts facility, a student centre with international size basketball courts and a media and television block. Total cost is approximately \$3.36 million, and design plans are available for viewing at the school. A sum of \$2.43 million has been allocated in this year's budget.

The Corinda State High School's \$7.2 million upgrade is progressing according to schedule and a number of stages have been completed. Some of the enhancements included a new technology learning centre and a performing arts centre, incorporating the existing school hall. In addition, two of the existing buildings on the site will be dismantled and new state-of-the-art facilities built. A sum of \$1.41 million has been allocated in this year's budget. Teachers and students have waited many years for these improvements, and soon Corinda State High School will have facilities to match the quality learning curriculum available there.

Corinda State School and the preschool centre are working to achieve the relocation of the preschool on the primary school grounds. I was involved in discussions and extensive consultation with parents when a new building option was chosen over a demountable building option. Preschool students will temporarily move into F block at the beginning of July, and their new facility will be completed by the beginning of 2002. A sum of \$436,800 has been set aside in this year's budget. I have asked the minister to ensure that time lines are met in relation to the completion of the new building for the convenience of all concerned.

Recently I inspected the new library extension works at the Middle Park State School. The extra space is a big plus for the library staff and the children who will use this facility. The old library block was always cramped and it was difficult for classes to access resource material on a regular basis. A sum of \$99,536 has been allocated in the budget for a new amenities block.

I continue to support other schools in my electorate and endeavour to meet with the principals, staff and P&C associations periodically to discuss matters of concern. For example, I recently arranged for a handrail to be constructed for the ramp at the rear of the Jamboree Heights State School hall following one of my regular visits with the principal. Jindalee State School will receive \$378,600 for two two-space relocatable buildings to accommodate the increasing number of students. This will alleviate immediate space shortages while a long-term solution is found.

The Oxley Secondary College was closed at the end of 2000 due to rapidly declining student numbers. The site has continued to be maintained by Education Queensland, even though it has been handed over to the Department of Natural Resources for disposal. I have asked to be continually informed of the disposal process to ensure that proper community consultation occurs, particularly with those residents most affected by the site. Some of the possible options will be discussed at a public meeting in due course. Residents will be kept informed of these events.

The Mount Ommaney Police Station continues to be a great asset to the Centenary suburbs and surrounds. On a regular basis I meet with the district inspector to discuss local problems and seek solutions. The Neighbourhood Watch groups keep me informed about incidents within their local areas so that I am able to take the matter up with police hierarchy. My commitment to increase the police presence in the Oxley-Corinda area has been realised in this year's budget. A police beat, one of only 10 statewide, has been approved for this area, and this will greatly assist local businesses at the Oxley Shopping Centre and improve the safety of pedestrians accessing public transport systems. I thank the Minister for Police, the Honourable Tony McGrady, for listening to my concerns.

In relation to railway stations, upgrade of access to the Oxley and Corinda railway stations is imminent, with construction expected to commence in the latter half of this year. Completion of

these projects is now anticipated by June 2002. People living in these suburbs will be pleased that improvements will enable better access for the elderly, parents with prams and the disabled. \$3.2 million has been previously allocated to upgrade these railway stations. With this and the CityTrans project completed at Darra last year, more people will be encouraged to use public transport to their place of employment. Hopefully, this in turn will result in fewer traffic problems on major access roads. The Minister for Transport realises that improving public transport facilities results in a cleaner, healthier environment.

The Centenary Highway continues to be used as the major access road from the western suburbs to the city. Traffic density on this road has escalated dramatically over the past 10 years. The bikeway was constructed as an alternative for commuters and has been taken up enthusiastically by a number of cyclists. After 2002, cyclists will be able to use the bikeway from Sumners Road right through to the city, with the link between the Centenary Bridge and Fig Tree Pocket Road completed. \$25,000 has been set aside in this budget to finalise planning for asphalt resurfacing of the Centenary Highway between the Ipswich Motorway and the Brisbane River. The total project will cost \$2.5 million.

In relation to public housing, \$1,503,000 was allocated in the budget to fund capital works projects in the electorate. Waiting lists for public housing, particularly for the elderly and people with disabilities, are up to six years, and these funds will help to decrease this waiting time. \$487,000 was set aside to purchase MacPherson Lodge to provide permanent accommodation for five disabled residents.

In relation to the war memorial, on Anzac Day this year the recently formed Centenary Suburbs RSL held its first ceremony at the new war memorial in Mount Ommaney. Over 250 people were present at the unveiling of the war memorial stone on that day. It was a great achievement by the war memorial committee, which I assisted in organising about two years ago. Without the help of Q-Build apprentices who carved the stone, this venture would not have been completed by 25 April. The first official service will be held on 11 November, Remembrance Day, and I look forward to this event with great enthusiasm as the patron of the Centenary Suburbs RSL. I would like to thank the Minister for Public Works for his invaluable assistance with this important project.

As to community grants, local groups and P&C associations have benefited from the government's Gaming Machine Benefit Fund. The fund provides grants to community organisations for a variety of purposes, such as the purchase of basic office equipment, community education activities, arts and recreation events. \$146,944 was provided to local groups in the Mount Ommaney electorate in support of various events and activities since July last year.

In relation to the International Year of the Volunteer, it is great that we officially celebrate and recognise volunteers in 2001. As the local member, I meet with and talk to these people every day of the week. They are the backbone of our community, and often we see them in more than one role or community organisation in the area. As many as 524,000 people in Queensland volunteer 93 million hours per year to various organisations. This equates to approximately \$2 billion to the state economy. The best part of being a volunteer is that you do it because you want to and not because you have to.

Apart from my role as state member, I also volunteer for a number of organisations including the Canossa aged care complex, the Blue Nurses, the Queensland Cancer Fund and, more recently, the Salvation Army's Red Shield Appeal. My personal experience is that the role of the volunteer is very satisfying and personally rewarding. But it takes a lot of dedication, commitment and concern for others to carry out that role successfully. To that end, I will be awarding medallions and certificates to outstanding volunteers in the local community in the coming months. The government appreciates the participation of all volunteers, and I congratulate them all for a job well done. There are many volunteer groups in the Mount Ommaney electorate, and I table a comprehensive list of groups, contact names and telephone numbers.

Mr FLYNN (Lockyer—ONP) (5.44 p.m.): I rise to address the 2001-02 state budget. It is my first opportunity to address a budget in this parliament as the member for Lockyer representing Pauline Hanson's One Nation. This is also the first state budget for the Honourable Treasurer, Mr Terry Mackenroth, and hopefully one of the last for this government.

I cannot, I believe, shift home all the responsibility to Treasury, because this government must assume collective responsibility for the fact that this budget is far from being inspiring or entrepreneurial. The budget was more of the same of yesterday, without any outstanding attempt

to try to help save our state and, indirectly, our country from being marginalised and controlled by overseas interests. We have a AAA rating maybe, but with reservations, that is, it could have been better.

One Nation would have been more impressed if the state budget had actively underpinned the rebuilding of Queensland's decentralised cities and towns. Why does Treasury fiddle in George Street, as Nero fiddled whilst Rome burned, while the government dances with the devil of economic ruin across our state? They must use their own eyes instead of peering through the spectacles of the bureaucrats.

Where is the concrete concern for rural development? Primary Industries Minister, Mr Henry Palaszczuk—gentleman that he is—indicates in his ministerial portfolio that he will continue to minister over industry adjustment. Adjustment? We do not want to hear about industry adjustment and restructuring, for these are the words of tinkering with add-ons and moving deckchairs around on the Titanic. It would have been better to hear about the regeneration or rebuilding of rural Queensland with efforts to generate new jobs and industries. Instead, the general thrust of the government's budget can only be described as bland, lacklustre and lacking vitality.

The Beattie government budget is nothing more than a public relations stunt; it is pure rubbish concealed in a mask of concern. Do we believe the government's words of concern for the rural sector when so often in the past its performance has not matched its rhetoric? One Nation would move to reverse the closure of primary industries, putting Australians first and boosting education, transport, roads, health care, law and order, technology and tourism. Whilst the icons of tourism, such as the new and still incomplete pedestrian bridge, are considered more important, they pale into insignificance when matched against the more urgent need to assist those in the food bowl of Australia. We cannot eat technology. Or do we rely upon the cheap imports? If we do not assist in making our state more competitive, there will not be a state budget in 20 to 30 years time, because somebody overseas will be delivering it for us.

Mr CUMMINS (Kawana—ALP) (5.47 p.m.): The Peter Beattie Labor government in this budget has delivered a surplus, and our budget is focused on job creation and supporting Queensland families. Our government has delivered on social priorities while still living within its means.

I start to speak today in support of this budget and will mention what positive initiatives this state budget has committed to my electorate of Kawana. My community has numerous concerns, and as part of the education portfolio I fully support the minister, Anna Bligh, and indeed the whole government in our push to become the Smart State.

Education is a winner on the Sunshine Coast, and some of the funding outcomes from this budget include the Bokarina Primary School, which has received a financial commitment to construct in the financial year 2001-02 a community and school hall. Previously, as a Caloundra city councillor, I was successful in committing that council to spend \$125,000 in the 2000-01 financial year, with the further commitment of another \$125,000 in the 2001-02 financial year.

While the Caloundra City Council's budget has not been brought down, I believe the mayor and deputy mayor of the Caloundra City Council are both men of their word and will continue to deliver on a positive initiative that was started by the Bokarina P&C and principal Peter Koster and which I fully supported both as a councillor and now that I am in state government. Both Bokarina and the entire Kawana Waters area will benefit from the new community hall. This state government, under the Improvement Subsidy Scheme, will also commit up to \$125,000. I will be proud to see the community hall built on the school grounds and will take great interest in the planning and construction and eventual opening. Kawana Waters High School has some excellent initiatives that I fully support, including an ongoing overseas student program that benefits the school, its students and local communities. Our society improves and our culture is enriched as we embrace people from other cultures and countries. I applaud the P&C, the principal and staff of Kawana Waters High.

I have continued to monitor the area to the west of both Bokarina Primary and Kawana Waters High School that is currently being developed by Lensworth Kawana Waters as they develop a community facility to be called Eastbank—part of a major rowing lake which is part of the ongoing development under the Kawana Waters master plan. In coming years it will be an exciting time for this area, and I have been involved with members from both schools and the Education Department in trying to establish a working relationship between the state government,

the council and the local developers to make sure that there are positive outcomes for both the schools and the entire community.

I wish to mention the Buddina State School. Recently I attended a P&C meeting at the school, and I have had numerous meetings with both the principal and various staff members. I applaud the Buddina State School and take this opportunity to mention their rainforest, of which they are rightly proud. A number of years ago, the school community decided to change an area that was basically a swampy playground into an attractive, useable environment. The former principal led the project. Support came from various community organisations, including the Lake Currumbundi/Kawana Lions Club, the Caloundra City Council, Lensworth Kawana Waters—which is a local development—Ibis Pools and G&B Earthmoving. These groups enabled the school to develop a base to begin planting numerous pieces of local vegetation. Over the past two years the groundsman, financially assisted by the P&C and student council, has continued to develop this area. A boardwalk has become the main feature within the rainforest, and seating areas for groups to study or just sit and enjoy the native surrounds provides a very pleasant location which has attracted many native local birds.

The project for this year, 2001, is to enclose the rainforest with environmentally friendly fencing and to erect signage to proudly advertise the rainforest to the whole community. Plans for future development include labels for plant identification, frog breeding and propagation areas. This area is well appreciated by the students, the teachers and the local community. As I mentioned earlier, I have been lucky enough to attend P&C meetings and I have given my full commitment to the Bokarina State School. I will support and continue to fight for all our schools across this great electorate of Kawana.

Recently I visited Mountain Creek Primary School and discussed numerous issues with the principal. I welcome his and other principals' support for this government's vision for Queensland to become the Smart State. Mountain Creek High School receives in this state budget \$174,300 for extra learning areas. I take this opportunity to mention the Premier and cabinet's gratitude for Mountain Creek High School hosting the very successful community cabinet earlier this year. That community cabinet was well received by all Sunshine Coast residents.

Recently I attended an ANZAC Day celebration at the Mountain Creek High School which was conducted by the students and various cadets from the local Air Training Corp Squadron, the Army and the Navy Sea Cadets. They enacted a very moving ceremony that was well attended by students and was well appreciated.

Buderim Mountain State School is a proud learning institute within my electorate which has a long history. I met with the principal and many of the staff and students earlier in the year when we presented the student leaders with their badges. I know that they will be very appreciative of the \$182,800 allocated in this budget for additional learning facilities.

I believe that the Chancellor Park community will also applaud this government's allocation of \$874,200 for a new double learning block at the Chancellor Park State School. This is another great initiative for a very proud school, where I again attended the badge presentation ceremony earlier this year. I also recently attended a P&C meeting one evening, and I was very happy with the positive, can-do attitude of those who attended. I sincerely hope that the Maroochy Shire Council can commit funds to this P&C as it plans for an out-of-school hours child-minding project.

I believe the employment of 395 additional teachers, 300 more police, 95 additional emergency services personnel and 120 extra health professionals will be applauded across our community and across Queensland. The Sunshine Coast unfortunately suffers from a higher proportion of unemployment, so I am very pleased to see that in the next financial year there will be \$100 million for jobs and training opportunities under the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle. I will go into much more detail on this later.

This positive Queensland government does not intend to rest on its laurels. Queensland will see this government continue to invest heavily in our communities, the economy and the environment to sustain positive growth for the future. I believe this is a responsible and balanced budget that will help deliver increasing living standards and employment opportunities for all Queenslanders.

Premier Peter Beattie is already on the record thanking the Sunshine Coast people for their positive support of his Labor government. Realising now that the Sunshine Coast has three strong and positive Labor voices in this historic state government, we are committed to delivering positive outcomes and improvements right across the community.

I hope that at the next federal election our area will see a positive man by the name of Ray O'Donnell elected to represent us in Canberra. I believe that for far too long our representatives have been lazy and inefficient and failed to deliver positive outcomes for our area. In the past the Sunshine Coast has suffered and has not received adequate funding at state and federal levels. This state budget goes a long way to turning that around, and I hope that with a federal Labor member in the upcoming federal Labor government, we will see positive resources coming out of Canberra, as they should have for a long time; but unfortunately our conservative representative and the conservative federal government have let us down and failed to deliver and assist this state government in a positive way.

I seek leave to incorporate the balance of my speech in *Hansard*.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McNamara): I understand Mr Speaker has been made aware of this.

Leave granted.

Ray O'Donnell, as many people will realise, is a former school teacher within the electorate and has worked hard and I will be fully supporting him to become our next Federal Member.

I hope the people of the Sunshine Coast decide to put a positive voice in the next Labor Government when we will see, as it is quite obvious that the present Liberal Government is in its death throes and will be thrown out at the next election. As I campaigned in the last State Election it is no good having a negative voice in Opposition, we need a positive voice in government and Ray O'Donnell will be this positive voice.

One of the major coups for the Sunshine Coast I believe is within the increase in fundings to local roads. This Government has allocated \$3.2 million for the commencement of the Kawana Arterial Road—a process that I have been happy to be involved in for quite a period of time. The \$3.2 million for the commencement of the Kawana Arterial Road will be seen as a very positive initiative from this Government to ease up traffic problems that I inherited around the Minyama and the northern areas of Kawana. This Arterial Road will link Warana to the motorway that heads west from Mooloolaba.

I also welcome the \$500,000 to continue the network planning study for the Sunshine Coast Motorway. I have had numerous meetings with the Minister for Main Roads, Steve Bredhauer and his staff and I will continue to push for the 4-laning of the Sunshine Coast Motorway between Mooloolaba and Sippy Downs.

This I believe will be one of the main entries into the Sunshine Coast. As many of us realise, there is no four-lane road connecting the Bruce Highway for coastal residents. The present Western Motorway, in my opinion, is the best link, realising that people can travel south to Kawana and Caloundra and north to Maroochydore, Coolumb and Noosa. The Nicklin Way and the Motorway both connect with the Western Motorway and that's why I will continue to push for the upgrading of this road in the long term.

\$3.5 million has also been allocated to rehabilitate and widen sections of the federally funded Bruce Highway in and around the Mountain Creek Road area. Not only will we see the commencement of essential major roadwork infrastructure, but for every million dollars spent on our roads, 17 jobs are provided in road construction related industries.

The Kawana Waters development control plan will see growth towards the west of Kawana Waters in and around the back of Hideaway Waters and the Glenfields area. This road is a very positive initiative and it has been out to consultation in recent months with a display, one in my office and a second display was well received by local residents in the Kawana Library.

Hundreds of brochures went out via letterbox drop to residents for comment and the funding will go a long way to improving the road situation within my electorate.

Where the Immanuel Lutheran College enters on to Wises Road will also see signalisation and approximately \$40,000 has been allocated for this to improve the situation for the people in that area.

In the Health Budget for our area, realising that the Nambour Hospital is the main public hospital for the Sunshine Coast and there has been debate whether the Nambour Hospital should be referred to as the Sunshine Coast hospital—but that debate probably for another day—I know that the Sunshine Coast residents will welcome a \$12.6 million boost for the redevelopment of this well appreciated hospital. It is quite common to witness positive letters to the Editor and I know from first-hand experience that the staff are dedicated at this hospital and do very good work. It is disappointing when negativity from local conservatives continue to complain about the funding for hospitals. I believe we have a good hospital system and boosts for funding to decrease the elective surgery waiting lists and the dental health care are well appreciated by our communities.

Madam Acting Deputy Speaker this positive budget also delivers substantial funding for the relocation and upgrade of the Buderim Ambulance Station. I have also toured all the emergency services area with the Emergency Services Minister, Mike Reynolds in recent months and both Kawana Ambulance Station and Kawana Fire Station will be investigated to see with the continued growth if they remain in these locations. If they are not in the best locations for future growth and to service our residents, I will be fighting to see that we relocate them at the minimum of fuss if more suitable sites can be found and if this of course is warranted.

Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, we have delivered a budget for all Queenslanders. As I have stated in the Health area, \$20 million over two years has been committed to reduce the long wait for elective surgery patients at public hospitals. \$20 million will be spent over three years in capital funding for the upgrade of existing disability services, new respite and family support services and innovative accommodation options for people with high support needs.

The Beattie Labor Government is committed to improving the economic and social framework of Queensland through the creation of more and better jobs and providing people with the opportunity to increase their skills.

Breaking the unemployment cycle

The Beattie Government expects to create an extra 28,000 jobs over the next three years under the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle. It will become a \$470 million investment since its inception in October 1998. By the end of this term

we expect to have created an additional 56,000 jobs in Queensland under the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle program.

Strategic programs

\$20 million over two years to allow 1,200 15-24 year olds undertake traineeships in environmental protection, horticulture and waste management as part of the Youth for the Environment and Local Communities.

\$5.4 million over three years to boost job opportunities for long term mature-aged job seekers by offering a \$4,000 wage subsidy to firms who employ them under the Experience Pays Program. About 1,350 workers aged 45 years or over are expected to receive wage subsidies under this initiative.

\$1.5 million over three years to help mature aged workers who have been unemployed for three months or longer gain job search and information technology skills as part of the Back to Work Program.

\$5 million to help inject 500 unemployed early school leavers and young adults into the workforce in areas of high youth unemployment as part of the Get set for Work Program. The initiative delivers up to \$6,000 per person for intensive specialised training assistance and a \$4,000 wage subsidy.

Capital works program

The Budget will deliver \$5.1 billion to fund capital works projects across Queensland. This extensive program, of which 58% is allocated for areas outside Brisbane, will support 46,300 full-time jobs. Highlights include:

\$134 million for the construction of 4 new schools, further staged works at 12 schools and more than 120 additional classrooms at existing schools.

\$240 million allocated for the rebuilding of acute hospital facilities in combination with the planned improvements to community health facilities.

Over \$1.5 billion in total Government Owned Electricity expenditure.

\$518.9 million in total capital expenditure for Queensland Rail, including \$105 million for track renewal between Rockhampton and Cairns and \$46 million for the Cairns Tilt Train Project.

\$738.4 million for the total roads capital expenditure.

Infrastructure and services

\$437 million in grants and subsidy programs to help local governments provide infrastructure and services to meet community needs and develop local jobs, business and industries by continuing to administer.

The Beattie Labor Government will continue to drive economic strategies towards new knowledge industries of the information age.

The Smart State is our plan for the future.

Creating new industries through innovation

\$100 million to set up an innovative smart State Research Facility Fund. It will foster the development of technologies to fuel knowledge-rich industries such as biotechnology, aviation and advanced manufacturing, while it will help stimulate innovation in our traditional industries.

Continuation of the \$270 million, 10-year Biotechnology Strategy which involves support for the commercialisation of research, to identify, develop and promote specific activities to maximise bio-industry trade and investment.

\$10 million over the next two years to construct and establish the Australian Aerospace Centre of Excellence. This centre will tap into the aviation industries high growth potential and establish South-East Queensland as a key aviation and transport hub in the Asia Pacific region.

\$2.6 million to purchase land adjacent to Brisbane's Alexandra Hospital to develop a Pharmacy Centre of Excellence. This centre will be the only facility of its kind in Australia where all phases of pharmaceutical development take place.

Making industries more competitive

\$151 million for the Agency for Food and Fibre Sciences to support sustainable production of high quality food and fibre by developing creative industry-based ideas for production improvements.

\$15 million over three years to improve the business management skills of primary producers through the FarmBis program. Over 21,000 producers have already participated in FarmBis, which gives grants to producers to undertake learning which enhances their business profitability and competitiveness.

\$2.5 million per year for research and development in climate information to enable Queensland's primary producers to better manage climate risks and opportunities.

Preparing our children

\$15 million is provided in 2001-02 for network learning communities in schools, an increase of \$10 million. This program ensures that schools properly reflect and prepare students for the rapidly advancing workplace by allocating funds for computer acquisitions, technical support and teaching training.

\$10 million over the next three years to develop six Technology, Maths and Science Centres of Excellence around the State.

\$3 million over the next three years is provided for the on-going expansion of the New Basics program, which consists of an innovative framework of curriculum, teaching and assessment to equip students for the new workplace and industries of the future.

\$18.8 million for additional teachers to reduce class size, provide support to students with disabilities and special needs and practice more effective behaviour management strategies.

The Beattie Labor Government is committed to improving and sustaining the quality of our environment.

The environment is one of Queensland's more strategic assets. It is home to many species and eco-systems, which, together with our natural and cultural heritage, play an important role in defining our quality of life.

The State Government will ensure the on-going richness of Queensland's natural assets will be enjoyed by current and future generations. It has targeted key areas to expand on its record of protecting the environment.

\$317.3 million has been allocated to the environmental Protection Agency and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to implement the State Government's initiatives.

Protecting our natural assets

\$10 million a year for the next four years to maintain National Parks across Queensland. This will fund up to 140 new park rangers and the equipment and supplies needed to help them maintain our National Park estate.

\$2 million over five years for The Great Walks of Queensland project. This will include long distance walking tracks in the Wet Tropics.

\$4.6 million in 2001-02 to plan water resources and arrangements to support sustainable and efficient use of water resources.

\$4 million as part of an \$81 million, seven-year commitment to tackle salinity and improve water quality in key catchments and regions.

Continued funding for the day-to-day management of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. This will result in better protection of the marine environment and improved interaction between marine park rangers and commercial and recreational users.

\$1 million over two years allocated to address Crown of Thorns infestation for The Great Barrier Reef.

\$2.4 million for the Beach Protection Authority to implement beach management strategies for areas where erosion threatens properties and residences.

\$350,000 has been allocated to manage acid sulfate soils.

\$10 million towards the structural adjustment package for the East Coast Trawl Fishery. This will result in the fair management and control of access to fisheries resources and underpin the sustainability of the industry.

More than \$8 million as the second instalment in a four-year \$80.8 million investment in the Southeast Queensland Forest Agreement (SEQFA). This will ensure 425,000 hectares of land will be protected as a 'forest reserve'. The agreement will ensure the transition to a plantation-based timber industry from one that is based on Crown native forests.

\$10 million in 2001-02 as part of the \$20 million, two-year Youth for the Environment and Local Communities Program. This will give 15 to 24 year olds accredited qualifications through work in environmental protection, horticulture and waste management.

The Beattie Labor Government is committed to maintaining and increasing support to communities, families, children and individuals across Queensland.

Families are vitally important when planning the overall health of our community. That is why the State Government will invest \$1.6 billion over three years in a range of new initiatives across several portfolios.

Providing children with the best start

An additional \$4.5 million over three years to expand child health centre services at 18 locations throughout the State.

\$500,000 to help young people quit smoking through an anti-smoking campaign run over two years.

\$12 million over three years to develop six new child care and family support hubs across the State. This will include \$1.4 million to upgrade school-age care facilities to meet new national standards.

A training strategy for 2,000 existing child care workers throughout Queensland.

Valuing and supporting the nurturing role of families.

An increase in funding of \$300,000 over three years to Parentline and Kids Help Line to extend counselling and support services.

\$304 million to Disability Services Queensland (an 11.6% increase from the 2000-01 Budget). This includes:

\$20 million in capital funding over three years to upgrade existing services and establish new enhanced family support and respite services. It will provide innovative housing options for people with high support needs and an upgrade of existing government and community-based services;

\$12.7 million to support adults with a disability by delivering more individualised support, expanding post school services for young people with high support needs and continue institutional reform initiatives for Government and non-Government services;

\$3.1 million to fund nine new family and respite services across the State; and

\$2.4 million for community and infrastructure support to help people with a disability.

Creating safe and supportive communities

\$18.2 million to continue reform of Child Protection including \$5.7 million on a recurrent basis and \$2.5 million non recurrent funding for child protection family support services and youth justice services.

\$8.4 million over three years to increase the basic foster care allowance and to double the clothing allowance.

Recruitment of a further 50 child protection staff and an increased number of official community visitors to young people in out-of-home care.

An additional \$1 million in 2001-02 to the Forde Foundation to assist former child residents of Queensland institutions.

An additional \$3 million over three years for new and enhanced community-based services to respond to and prevent domestic violence.

The Beattie Labor Government is committed to improving the lives of Queenslanders by maintaining modern and reliable health care practices and flexible models of care and accommodation.

A record Health Budget of \$4.06 billion in 2001-02 with \$364 million in capital projects will support the Government's commitment. It will provide a quality health system, a better quality of life for Queenslanders and tackle the serious issue of drugs.

Providing a quality health system

\$240 million to rebuild acute facilities and improve community health facilities. This investment will support the on-going care between hospital and community-based services and help deliver high quality community-care services.

\$10 million as part of a \$120 million investment over five years to rebuild and upgrade State Government Nursing homes.

An extra \$13 million over three years to purchase advanced medical equipment, including a \$4.4 million capital grant to the Royal Flying Doctor Service for a fully-equipped aeroplane.

\$25 million as part of the on-going Radiation Oncology Services Plan.

\$7.9 million over three years to upgrade staff accommodation as an incentive to retain and attract nurses and allied health staff to regional and rural areas.

Increased funding of \$750,000 to continue State government support behind the Queensland Institute for Medical Research.

\$5.6 million in 2001-02 to place 10 nurses in secondary schools across Queensland as part of a four year \$14 million investment.

A better quality of life for Queenslanders

An extra \$8.3 million will be spent on mental health services this year, including an additional \$3.4 million for community mental health services and \$4.9 million for acute inpatient mental health services.

An extra \$2 million over the next two years to assist in meeting the demand for important home medical aids and equipment. This will maintain the ability of seniors to live independently.

An additional \$10 million will be spent this year to reduce the number of patients awaiting elective surgery.

\$5 million to reduce waiting lists for public oral health services in areas of high demand. This raises the total commitment to \$26 million over the next three years.

Tackling drugs

\$500,000 to help more young people quit smoking through an anti-smoking campaign run over two years.

\$500,000 to set up an additional 30 rehabilitation places in Cairns, Townsville and Mackay. This builds on the existing 600 rehabilitation places in Queensland.

More than \$15 million will be spent over the next four years to continuing Alcohol and Drug Treatment Programs.

Development of indigenous alcohol and drug services in Mt Isa, Cape York, Cooktown and Rockhampton.

Employ more counsellors at the Alcohol and Drug information Service, which provides 24 hour seven day a week advice.

The Beattie Labor Government is committed to a strong, responsive and well-resourced police service and correctional system that lays the foundation for safe and secure communities.

The 2001-02 Budget contains a range of law and order initiatives to help tackle crime and make Queensland communities safer and more supportive.

This Budget will strengthen our police service, make our prisons more secure, boost community safety and put more funding into justice services, such as legal aid.

Strengthening our police service

300 extra officers will be employed in 2001-02 as part of the Beattie government's on-going commitment to increase police officer numbers from 7,644 to a target of 9,100 by 2005.

The Sunshine Coast has recently welcomed 6 more police officers and yet another 6 will be further allocated to our area in July. I know our community welcomes and appreciates them.

Another 10 police beats and 10 shopfronts will be delivered over the next four years at a cost of \$2.8 million. During our first term, we delivered 26 new police beats and shopfronts.

\$40 million over three years will deliver 16 Tactical Crime Squads each with 14 officers focusing on drug and drug-related crimes.

More than \$950,000 will be spent in 2001-02 to continue the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Police Trial. Preliminary results at Badu Island, Yarrabah and Woorabinda show the 12-month trial has been effective, through there is more work to be done.

Secure prisons

\$12 million for the completion of the \$89.5 million Capricornia Correctional Centre in Rockhampton.

\$97 million over two years (\$49.9 million in 2001-02) to build the 500-cell Maryborough Correctional Centre.

\$0.1 million to trial Buprenorphine as part of the detoxification and treatment programs offered to drug-addicted prisoners as a new way to help them get off drugs.

Justice

\$2.5 million per annum to increase services provided by Legal Aid Queensland and Community Legal Centres, ensuring legal assistance for those most in need.

Community renewal and safety

In its first term, the Beattie Government funded renewal and safety initiatives in 13 communities at a cost of \$37 million. During its second term, it will continue to fund the program at a cost of \$45 million and include new initiatives in Vincent and Rasmussen in Townsville.

\$6.7 million boost to the existing \$39.5 million Queensland Rail Safety program to raise safety and security levels on trains and at stations. The initiative will introduce on-board security personnel, closed circuit television cameras and improvements to lighting and fencing. It will also include:

\$6.7 million over five years to expand station security by providing Queensland Rail station staff and security guards at 30 additional City train stations.

\$530,000 to complete Police Outposts at Manly and Redbank stations in 2001, resulting in all main Citytrain lines with police Rail Squad coverage.

The second Beattie Labor Government has delivered a responsible and balanced Budget with strong forecasts and improved service delivery.

It has delivered a Budget for all Queenslanders, whether they live in regional, rural or metropolitan areas.

The engine room of economic growth.

Queensland's economic growth is forecast at 4%—that is above the Commonwealth's forecast of 3.25% and those of New South Wales and Victoria (2.75%)

Still the most competitive tax state despite the GST impact

Queenslanders will pay on average;

\$631 less in State taxes than residents of New South Wales, and

\$416 less in State taxes than residents of Victoria.

Jobs for the future

Queensland is expected to record employment growth of 2%—that is above the commonwealth's forecast of 1% and those of New South Wales (0.75%) and Victoria (0.5%).

46,300 full-time jobs will be supported in 2001-02 as a result of Queensland's full capital works program.

Environment

\$2.4 million for the Beach Protection Authority to implement beach management strategies for areas where erosion threatens properties and residences.

\$10 million a year for the next four years to maintain national Parks across Queensland.

Smart State

\$100 million to create the Smart State Research Fund which will invest in leading edge R&D facilities and build competitive advantages for Queensland through innovation.

\$2.6 million to purchase land adjacent to Brisbane's Alexandra Hospital to develop a Pharmacy Centre of Excellence.

Quality health care

6.5% increase in the \$4.1 billion health budget, including \$20 million over two years to reduce elective surgery waiting lists. An additional 120 health professionals will be employed this year.

\$240 million to re-build acute hospital facilities in combination with the planned improvements to community health facilities.

Safe and Supportive communities

An extra 300 police officers, as part of the Beattie Government's commitment to increase police numbers from 7,644 serving police officers to a target of 9,100 by 2005.

\$97 million over two years to continue work on the new 500 bed secure prison at Maryborough, which started in 1999-2000.

Putting families first

12% increase in funding for Disability Services Queensland, including additional support for families and individuals.

\$134 million to build 4 new schools, continue staged works at 12 schools and build more than 120 additional classrooms at existing schools.

This Budget meets the service needs of Queenslanders and sets the Sunshine State up as still the most competitive tax State despite the impact of the crippling Goods and Services Tax (GST) that our present Federal Treasurer and the present Prime Minister continue to applaud and refuse to concede the damage and hurt it has caused.

This State Government Budget goes a long way to improving the lives of Queenslanders and I thank the Treasurer, the Premier and all of the Cabinet for delivering on many of the issues I have raised and I commend this Budget to the House.

Mr SEENEY (Callide—NPA) (5.57 p.m.): The 2001 state budget will be forever remembered. It will be forever remembered as the budget that gave the lie to Peter Beattie's fraudulent claim to achieve a five per cent unemployment rate. For three years now, a five per cent unemployment rate has been the Premier's signature catchcry, along with his empty chant of 'jobs, jobs, jobs'. This budget gives the lie to both. This budget exposes forever just how empty, how meaningless and how shallow that catchcry and that chant has been. This budget exposes just how cynical and how false that approach has been in the management of the Queensland economy. That five per cent was never a real target, and those jobs, jobs, jobs are to be further denied to Queensland people.

I have said before in this parliament that this place is known as the people's House for a reason. Here, people matter most. Not catchcries, not meaningless arbitrary targets, but the people of Queensland matter most in here, and it will be the people of Queensland who will feel

the pain of the failure of this Beattie budget. This is a boring budget. It is an unimaginative budget. It does not provide the inspiration and the facilitation that the Queensland economy so badly needs. It is a budget of lost opportunity, and it is a budget of destroyed hope.

It is a budget that has failed especially in the portfolio areas for which I am responsible and it is a budget that fails the regional areas of Queensland such as the one that I represent. There are many areas in this budget where it is clearly inadequate in those portfolio areas of Natural Resources and Mines and Police and Corrective Services. In the time that I have today, I want to outline some of those inadequacies as well as make some brief comments about the effect that the budget has on my own electorate.

The portfolio of Natural Resources and Mines illustrates the inadequacy of this budget like no other. With the possible exception of Primary Industries, no other area best illustrates the cynical failure of this budget to provide money to implement the programs that the government so often talks about. No other area has more lost opportunities, and that is indicative of this government's ongoing attitude to the resource sector and the agricultural and mining industries that operate within that sector. This budget illustrates clearly that, once again, the reality falls far short of the rhetoric. In fact, it falls far short in what is a cynical betrayal of the government's responsibility to properly manage the state's natural resource sector and facilitate the sustainable development of its considerable potential to provide the job opportunities that are so often talked about but never delivered.

Despite the critical need for that development throughout much of regional Queensland, for the fourth year in a row the state Labor government has provided no money at all for new major water infrastructure projects. Many regional Queensland communities must now face the reality that the potentially viable future that sustainable water infrastructure development could bring is to be forever denied to them under this government, intent as it is on emotively promoting water storage, and irrigation in particular, in the most negative terms possible. We have to accept that the Labor government has a mandate to implement changes to resource management in Queensland. But along with that mandate comes a responsibility to implement those changes in a fair and equitable manner.

There is no money in this budget to provide the compensation necessary to allow the much-vaunted water reforms to be implemented in anything like a fair and equitable manner. There is no money in this budget to provide for the implementation of the Vegetation Management Act. There is no money for compensation for land-holders who have suffered and will continue to suffer reductions in their viability and losses in their capital values. There is no attempt in this budget to provide for basic fairness in the implementation of the Vegetation Management Act and the water reform process. This budget confirms the Beattie government's intention to steal the property rights of Queensland's rural land-holders to meet simplistic arbitrary targets in resource management in an attempt to woo support from an urban constituency that is remote from the realities of that natural resource management.

This government's priority in resource management, like in so many other areas of its administration, is all about information management. It is all about creating the right media image in an urban constituency. Anything more than a cursory glance at the details of this budget reveal that that image is a false one. This budget was an opportunity for the government to provide some real commitment to responsible natural resource management. Instead, it is a mishmash of reallocated funds with figures from departmental operating expenses being allocated to programs in an attempt to give an impression of funding those programs. In some cases, there is no new money at all. In many other cases, what there is is allocated over four years or, in the case of the salinity programs, over seven years. The deliberate strategy is to announce a large figure, make it sound good, grab the headline but then make a very small commitment in the current year with the rest of the money promised on the never-never with its delivery dependent upon allocations in future budgets.

The budget has provided no financial resources to give substance to the government's rhetoric. Instead, in so many cases the government continues to mouth empty platitudes and blame the federal government when it becomes obvious that there is no money for implementation or promised funding in the future for programs for which they want to claim the credit now.

The examples are many. To the two that I have mentioned already, the Vegetation Management Act and the water reform process, many others can be added, none better than the Great Artesian Basin and the program to control and cap free-flowing bores and replace open bore drains with pipe and troughs to stem the billion litres a day flow from the basin. That is a

great program; one that we all support. For the second year in a row, the government has reneged on its commitment to properly fund its share of the program. Its allocation of \$2 million in this budget is half the amount—half the amount—it agreed to when it signed up with the Commonwealth last year. After only two years, the state's commitment to this very worthy program is now \$4 million behind. That is clearly indicative of the lack of commitment that is encapsulated in the detail of this budget.

In the mining sector of the portfolio, the most noteworthy issue is that of royalties from the coal industry. It is noteworthy for its sheer bloody-mindedness and hypocrisy. In the three years of this Beattie Labor government there is certainly no industry in Queensland that has been treated worse than has the coal industry. It has been treated badly because there are those in the Labor government who see the coal industry as something of a sunset industry with no future, or an industry that somehow we as Queenslanders cannot be proud of, despite the enormous contribution that the industry makes to the Queensland economy.

That attitude is inherent in the government's energy policy and in a great many other places as well. In that energy policy, the government effectively quarantined 15 per cent of the energy generation market from the coal industry in a misguided attempt to pick winners in terms of emission controls. Rather than set emission targets and let fuel source industries compete fairly, they attack the esteem of the coal industry in the eyes of the general public and in the eyes of the international market by shutting it out of 15 per cent of the market as though they are an unworthy energy source.

Now in this budget, they surmise that the industry has increased its profitability. They surmise that it is now doing better so it should be ripe for the picking in terms of increasing the royalty take from the mines to the government's coffers. The Treasurer was arrogant enough to say in his budget speech that because the industry was enjoying greater profitability, he was intending to somehow refine the royalty collections to increase the government's take from the industry. Already the coal industry contributes over \$500 million in royalties to the state's coffers. There is not one Queenslander in this state who does not benefit from and depend on that revenue. There is not one Queenslander who does not have the coal industry to thank for the infrastructure that they enjoy in their communities. That revenue is provided by the coal industry despite the very poor way in which the industry has been treated by this government. Instead of recognising that, the government is anticipating a massive total of \$696 million in royalties from the entire mining industry. The coal industry already contributes over \$500 million in royalties to the state's coffers. Those figures should justify a much higher priority for the industry and a much greater consideration when it comes to policy determination across a range of areas of government administration. Rather than recognise that, this Labor government has continued to place impediments in the path of the industry and take every opportunity to get its hands deeper into the pockets of the miners.

It is all very well to wax lyrical about the Smart State, and that is a worthy goal and it is a concept that we all support, but we must never lose sight of the reality that it is industries such as the mining industry, along with agriculture and tourism, that pay the bills and will continue to pay the bills for Queensland for a long time to come. That certainly has not been recognised in this budget, or by this government over the past three years.

I turn now to the Police portfolio. Law and order is an issue that is of great interest to every Queenslander. The Queensland Nationals believe that every Queenslander has the right to feel safe in their own communities and the state government has a responsibility to uphold law and order in those communities to protect that right. That should be a cornerstone responsibility of every state government and any state budget should recognise and reflect that cornerstone responsibility. Upholding law and order requires legislation that reflects the community's expectations and values, an adequately funded and staffed Police Service to enforce those laws, and a secure correctional services system that protects the community from offenders while punishing those offenders for the crimes that they commit against society. Under this government, we have seen a steady erosion of the Police Service's ability to enforce the law. We have seen a series of security breaches in the correctional services system, which erode the confidence that people should have in that system. This is a government that appears increasingly soft on crime. It has reached the stage now where many people in many areas no longer feel safe to walk their streets and no longer feel safe even in their own homes. That is a disturbing and unacceptable trend that must be reversed, but one that can be reversed only by getting more police out on the beat and devoting more resources to the pursuit of those who break the law.

Following the release of the 2001 state budget, the Beattie government made much of the additional 300 police to be recruited this year. Those extra police are certainly needed and, of course, we support and applaud the recruitment of extra police. However, they should not be tucked away in the office. They should not be sitting behind a speed camera. They should be out on the beat. They should be out in the community. While the additional numbers will be welcome, more are certainly needed. It is worth noting that, once again, like so many parts of this budget, we see a small commitment in the first year or two and the rest is promised on the never-never, with its delivery dependent on future budgets.

The Beattie government went to the 2001 state election promising to boost police numbers by 2005 to 9,001 from the current base of 7,644. The provision of an additional 300 officers this year is already 64 officers behind the 364 that the government actually needs to recruit to honour its election promises on a pro rata basis.

Extra police is one thing, but extra resources to allow those police to do the job expected of them by the community is quite another. This week we all heard the criticism from the Police Union that the police have been asked to run on the smell of an oily rag and that this budget has now taken away that rag. We know about the fuel rationing and the cost cutting that police have to spend so much time grappling with when they should be out on the job. Those comments by the Police Union are a true reflection of the comments made by police officers to me as I move around the state. They are a true reflection of the frustration that is felt by ordinary police officers in every community, who are trying to do a difficult job. The police are just as frustrated as the community with the continuing attacks on their operational budgets. For the minister to denigrate the Police Union is a hallmark of the man and his propensity to ignore the issue and shoot the messenger. In attacking the Police Union's comments, the minister has attacked every police officer in this state.

The Beattie government's 2001-02 state budget contained no funding at all to upgrade security at Queensland police stations or to fix hygiene and safety problems at Brisbane's Police Academy. Despite the fact that a number of police stations need replacing and others are shown to be substandard in terms of security, the Queensland Police Service's capital works budget has been reduced by almost four and a half million dollars in this budget. This is a remarkable move considering some of the recent security breaches that have occurred. The theft of the gun safe containing 17 hand guns from the Coorparoo Police Station was a result of poor security and poor facilities. That problem is common to dozens of older police stations around the state. However, no provision has been made in this budget to prevent a repeat of the Coorparoo break-in at other police stations. There is just no money to back up the rhetoric.

There is also the reality that police in a number of towns across Queensland are jammed into little old stations like sardines in a can. The stations at Murgon and Childers in my area are classic examples. The former Borbidge government bought the land to build a new station in Childers but, for the fourth budget in a row, the Beattie government has not provided any commitment to constructing that station. During the investigation into the backpacker hostel fire, the police sent to the area were forced to utilise the Canegrowers' offices next door because the existing station at Childers was so inadequate. The Childers Police Station is not an isolated example. Police workers have a tough enough job as it is without living and working in substandard and unhealthy office accommodation.

The Beattie government has also failed to fund a much-needed major upgrade of Brisbane's Police Academy, despite the squalid conditions at the ageing facility that were exposed in media reports this year. The Police Minister had an opportunity to revive the \$20 million proposal to upgrade the Brisbane Police Academy. The government's Cabinet Budget Review Committee scrapped those plans in 1999 and, again, this budget has failed to address that decision. I do not believe it is at all acceptable that police recruits have to live and train in the sort of squalid, vermin-infested conditions that were exposed in February.

The police budget is again evidence that the Beattie government's fourth budget is a budget of missed opportunities and inadequacy. In this portfolio area too, the reality fails to meet the rhetoric.

To conclude, I will make some comments about my own electorate of Callide. The morning after the budget, the *Courier-Mail* carried a headline on the front page stating that Labor had rewarded its heartland. Given the huge majority that the government has as a result of the last election, that is probably a fair expectation. However, in such circumstances it is not surprising that an electorate such as Callide has missed out on much of the capital spending programs. Like other electorates in regional Queensland, Callide has missed out on capital spending programs,

despite its obvious need for massive infrastructure spending to provide things like roads, dams and economic development. That also gives the lie to one of the Premier's favourite chants of governing for all Queenslanders on an equal basis. This budget gives the lie to that chant as well.

In such circumstances, it is gratifying for me to see that a very few of the long-fought-for projects have survived and are to be provided with funding in this year's budget. In particular, the \$7 million project to replace the bridge across the Dawson River at Theodore is welcome. It will be great to see the project proceed at last to solve the problem of traffic interruption at the Dawson River.

In contrast, it is disturbing to see the reduction in overall road funding for the statistical divisions that cover respective parts of the Callide electorate. I endorse the comments and concerns expressed by the shadow Minister for Main Roads in his contribution to this debate earlier today.

It is interesting to note an allocation of \$500,000—half a million dollars—to move the beef breeding centre from Biloela to Belmont near Rockhampton. This project was in last year's budget, where the figure quoted was \$400,000. This move has been strenuously opposed by the Banana Shire Council as well as many beef producers in the central Queensland area. I have spoken a number of times in the parliament about the issue and I have made representations to ministers on a number of occasions. The cost has gone from \$400,000 to \$500,000. Once again, I suggest to all the ministers who are involved in this decision that this is a waste of money and, indeed, a backward step. The beef breeding centre would be much better left to operate at the Biloela research station where it has become an industry success. That half a million dollars could be allocated to other areas in the budget to fulfil some of the empty promises that the government has made.

In conclusion, I say again that this budget will be long remembered by the people of Queensland as the budget that gave the lie to the empty chants for which this state Labor government has become so well known. It will become known as the budget of broken promises and destroyed hopes.

Ms NELSON-CARR (Mundingburra—ALP) (6.17 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to rise in support of the fourth Beattie budget. I am very opposed to the comments of the member for Callide. I also congratulate the Treasurer on presenting a grassroots budget that delivers to its Labor heartland, the people who so overwhelmingly and convincingly voted this government back into office in February this year.

A government member interjected.

Ms NELSON-CARR: We have indeed. This budget delivers all of its election promises and has a heavy emphasis on its social commitments. The people who had confidence in returning the Beattie government will not be disappointed. This is a budget that invests in people and demonstrates a commitment to the diverse and emerging needs of Queenslanders. Our Smart State enhances our reputation as an attractive place to combine work and lifestyle.

In the interests of time, Madam Deputy Speaker, and because of the number of people who wish to speak in this debate, I seek leave to incorporate the rest of my speech in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The budget puts people first and it recognises that all our efforts must be directed toward improving the lives of Queenslanders through job creation strategies, major jobs projects, schools, health services, transport, sport and recreation, the legal system and the management of our natural resources. In doing this, our Government will continue its positive role in improving its relationship with the people of Queensland. We will continue to listen to people by holding regular Community Cabinet Meetings and regional forums.

Critical periods in our lives include early childhood, the transition from school to work and retirement—our Government will support people through these times.

As I have said before in this place, I made a commitment to the people of Mundingburra to bring honesty, integrity and social justice into political decision making.

As a mother of a large family and a former teacher and guidance officer, I know full well what a budget like this one means. The critics on the whole have missed the point entirely to suggest "the budget falls short" and "spending is slashed" is a mere nonsense.

I am surprised by community leaders in my area of the north who have lost sight of the fact that a cohesive community and a safer community, means putting families first. To compare regions to regions is comparing apples to oranges. Needs assessment must take precedence over formula driven models. The Beattie Government, in meeting all its election commitments has heard the people and has spent more on regional Queensland than the south-east corner.

In doing this, the community has become an active participant in government decision making. This budget has built on its first term achievements by investing in people and communities.

The Government's economic strategies centre on the achievement of a sustainable level of economic growth with the main focus on increasing living standards and employment opportunities for all Queenslanders. We have targeted assistance in the areas of education, training, industry, growth and innovation. We are building and supporting regions including the provision of assistance to people with disabilities. We have a commitment to continue this support, including carers, families and community groups, with an 11.6% increase in operating expenditure.

Over the next 3 years, \$20M is provided to enhance disability service infrastructure within Government and community-based facilities, including capital and equipment upgrades, new respite and family support services and innovative accommodation options for people with high support needs.

Having a healthy and sustainable environment is essential to our future and I am committed to working with our Government and the community to continue protecting the environment and its bio diversity for current and future generations.

A snapshot of northern budget spending sees:-

- More than \$309.4M or \$1,650 per person to provide essential government services;
- \$40M for roads;
- \$28M for health projects;
- \$21M for Public Housing, Community Housing and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing;
- \$60M for Queensland Rail and Port Authority projects;
- \$20.9M for local governments, for roads, water sewerage and other works;
- \$15.9M to be spent on Education;
- \$3.3M for Queensland Heritage Trails Network;
- \$3.4M on Employment and Training;
- A total of \$3.1M allocated for the Queensland Ambulance Service and Fire and Rescue Authority;
- \$84M from Ergon and Powerlink Queensland;
- \$3.12M for Youth Detention Centres;
- \$4.3M on Police; and
- \$2.7M for the development of Nelly Bay.

And a closer analysis reveals spending in my electorate of Mundingburra to reflect the nature of the community itself, families, education, health and safety.

Education lies at the heart of the Beattie Government's vision to make Queensland the Smart State. We have a record budget in education, signalling our commitment to achieving that vision. With a pay increase to Queensland teachers of over 14%, the scene is set to attract more dedicated teachers.

There is \$50M for the Triple R school maintenance program over 3 years.

\$22.8M for students with disabilities.

\$10M for eight new Centres of Excellence in Maths, Science and Technology over three years.

\$18.2M to boost IT in schools.

\$1M a year to expand the new BASICS trial to a further 20 schools.

\$11.9M to assist more than 70 schools through the Cooler Schools program and at least 135 more teachers for term 1, 2002 as the next stage in providing an extra 800 teachers over four years.

In Mundingburra, I am pleased to announce:-

- \$5,351,705 in total Education Capital Spending in Electorate, including:
- \$4.1M for relocation (stage 2) of Aitkenvale Special School;
- \$414,427 for relocation (stage 1) of Aitkenvale Special School;
- \$445,900 for 4 space relocatable buildings at Annandale State School;
- \$144,297 in Cooler Schools Subsidy for Cranebrook State School;
- \$809,252 for Heatley Secondary College's Renewal Program (Phase 2);
- \$87,261 in Cooler Schools Subsidy for Heatley State School; and
- \$809,252 for Pimlico State High School's Renewal Program (Phase 2).

This should put to rest any suggestions that the electorate has missed out.

As Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health, I have been honoured to take part in providing healthy alternatives to new and innovative ways at looking at holistic health.

We will continue our \$2.8B health building program including an additional \$120M over 5 years to rebuild and redevelop State Government nursing homes, \$5M in 2001-02 to reduce waiting lists for dental health services and an additional \$20M over two years to reduce the percentage of long wait elective surgery patients at public hospitals across the State.

The completion of the new Townsville Hospital in my electorate sees the finalisation of \$177M with \$19,810,000 for its redevelopment. I know my community will be more than appreciative of this state-of-the-art facility.

I have worked closely with the former Assistant Commissioner and more recently with Assistant Commissioner of Police, Graham Williams, in securing \$500,000 for the construction of a new complex to accommodate the Mundingburra Police Station, Townsville DHQ, Northern Region Office, the Townsville District property office and the Townsville SOC.

\$2,154,000 in total funds has been allocated for public housing's capital works in my electorate.

I am delighted that a Community Renewal Program in the Vincent area is another election commitment we have achieved.

The State Budget earmarks almost \$500,000 to initiate renewal activities in Vincent.

The funds will be used to develop a local Renewal Plan and Community Reference Group for the Vincent area and to ensure appropriate consultation across the community.

Local renewal projects in other areas are already delivering benefits in the form of better facilities, employment and training opportunities, and innovative services based on needs identified through consultation with residents.

The Minister for Public Works and Housing, Robert Schwarten, indicated during the election campaign earlier this year that the Community Renewal Program would continue to receive funds totalling \$45M over the next three years. I look forward to working with the Vincent community at large.

The transfer of the long-term Community Housing Program funded dwellings in Pimlico from Manchester Unity Oddfellows Friendly Society Queensland to Carville Seniors Accommodation Association Inc has occurred and they have been assured that the property will remain under the Government's long-term Community Housing Program Guidelines.

In continuing to make our community safe and secure, a number of important local projects will be funded in the 2001-02 Transport and Main Roads Budget.

\$80,000 has been allocated for expenditure on roadside infrastructure for Twin Cities' bus routes and \$200,000 for expenditure on wheelchair accessible buses for Townsville.

The Rail Budget of \$105M will be spent on track renewal works between Rockhampton and Cairns.

A number of important local projects will also be funded in the Main Roads 2001-02 Budget, including \$1.2M for bridge repairs to Ross River bridge, at a total project cost of \$1.7M.

Under the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS), the following State Government contributions have been provided for local government projects:

\$30,000 for pedestrian crossing improvements at various locations within Townsville City, with a total subsidy of \$90,000; and

\$38,500 for provision of set-down and parking area at Annandale State School, in Townsville City, with a total subsidy of \$85,000.

There is \$3.25M in State funding for the four-lane construction of the Douglas Arterial Separable Portion on the Bruce Highway, in advance of federal funding for this National Highway project, to enable works to be completed to coincide with the opening of the new Townsville Hospital.

In addition, \$240,000 has been allocated for the construction of a new Ambulance Station at Douglas. This will be co-located with the new hospital.

I am proud to be part of a stable and responsible Government which is committed to all Queenslanders. In providing a tight, socially responsible management plan, we are improving people's quality of life, so that they can be part of an active, vital community which has true vision. In the Townsville region we have five elected Members, including a Minister and a Parliamentary Secretary. We have all worked hard for the north which has received a good, sound and credible budget, which will help to forge even stronger connections with the Queensland community.

Miss ELISA ROBERTS (Gympie—ONP) (6.18 p.m.): I rise to speak in response to the Beattie government's state budget on behalf of the citizens of the Gympie electorate. First of all, I would like to highlight those few areas within the budget that may affect my electorate in a positive way. Firstly, there is the funding for 140 new park rangers, should we be entitled to one of those. If the additional \$3 million to be allocated over a three-year period to the Home Assist/Home Secure Program for the elderly and people with disabilities occurs, it will be very well received by my constituents.

An amount of \$50 million is to be provided over a three-year period to provide school maintenance and upgrades. I am sure that the schools in my electorate will be ecstatic with that promise, should it be kept, particularly the Cooroy State School, which has been fighting to have satisfactory improvements and renovations carried out in order to cater to the special needs students at that school.

The \$2.5 million per annum increase being provided to Legal Aid could not have come at a better time. Only last week I was told by Legal Aid Queensland that one of my constituents, though deserving of legal aid, was not to receive any assistance because Legal Aid is broke.

One of the budget highlights which will affect the Gympie electorate positively is the government's plan to provide \$3.1 million for the support of children and families, to meet the individual needs of families with children with a disability and to fund the development and operations of nine new family support and respite services across the state. I must say that that is badly needed in my electorate and would be much appreciated.

The investment of \$0.5 million to allow the Rural Fire Service to begin a five-year program to update and develop a range of new training and reference materials to train Queensland's 45,000 rural fire volunteers is a positive step in encouraging those volunteers to remain active in their various brigades and enthusiastic in their delivery of a much-needed service in many regional

and rural areas. I am sure that all rural fires will be pleased that, at the very least, they were acknowledged.

The commitment to provide \$1 million worth of equipment for SES volunteers statewide is another positive step in further encouraging volunteers to remain in this capacity and to improve their ability to carry out the many and various roles which they perform for their communities. It is also a positive step to see the rehabilitation of abandoned mines in Gympie.

With regard to employment, the budget outlines a number of 'back to work' and 'educating school leavers' programs, which really seem to be well placed avoidance tactics to cover the real issue of employment, that being the fact that there is not any. The schemes which this government is providing to those who are unemployed are just tactics to keep the public occupied whilst they wait, wait and wait for the jobs, jobs, jobs to materialise. Even though I am one of the youngest members in this parliament, even I can remember a time when jobs were everywhere. I am sure all honourable members in this chamber have stories of how, when we were young, we could leave a job in the morning and have another in the afternoon. Sadly, those days are gone and in its place are a number of quasi-employment strategies that, frankly, are not fooling anyone.

This government could have better utilised its millions of dollars in creating employment, encouraging small businesses and assisting those already in business, that is, the dairy farmers, the loggers and the many businesses who supported their industries, and the fishermen who are finding it more and more difficult to remain in their industry and to maintain economic feasibility.

There are also a number of business management, better practice and viability-type schemes outlined in this budget. Once again, this is a complete waste of time to those industries that this government has successfully destroyed. Dairy farmers did not need any advice on how to run their businesses efficiently. They were going along quite nicely, thank you, until the rug was pulled from under them. There will not be much point teaching people how to be business savvy or management smart if they do not have a business! It is nice to talk about back to work initiatives and training initiatives, but at the moment the priority and emphasis should be on jobs existing in the first place. I can almost guarantee that there would be few Queenslanders who would disagree with me.

It seems quite ridiculous to me that in this budget the government talks about identifying and assisting emerging industries, whilst at the same time they are destroying other industries that have been lucrative businesses for generations. Is the government sick of farmers and primary producers? Are they too boring for this government? Do they feel like supporting something new and more exciting than industries which have been the strength and the main support of this nation since its inception? Or is it because in this great, big trendy world of globalisation this government has been told what industries it should support and encourage and which ones to destroy because it is going to be the job of another country to produce those goods?

I also note that the government plays up the fact that it closed portions of land in the name of conservation, but they failed to mention the real results of these closures: people without jobs. In regards to this paltry Experience Pays Program, the government should have been tougher on employers who were found to have discriminated against workers because they were deemed to be 'over the hill'. I know for a fact that such disgusting behaviour does occur because I worked for such an employer on the Sunshine Coast who, when looking to hire another secretary, gave me the order to 'throw away any resumes of people born before 1960'. That would mean that half of the honourable members in this chamber would be out of a job if they had an employer with the same views. I say to this government: forget about the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative and create some jobs, jobs, jobs—and then some more jobs!

There is one particular initiative of this government of which I strongly approve, and that is the Cooler Schools Program. But, guess what, my electorate is not entitled to it! Apparently the schoolchildren in the Gympie electorate are not included in the program. Apparently they are not entitled to work in a cool, comfortable and therefore productive environment. I would encourage the Minister for Education to visit one of these schools during summer to appreciate just how stifling and uncomfortable the heat can be for both the students and the teachers and then explain to them why they are not entitled to be included in the Cooler Schools Program.

I wish to express my dismay at the fact that, after years of lobbying on behalf of local police officers for an upgraded headquarters for Gympie, this government has seen fit to provide only a totally inadequate amount of money to 'commence planning' of a new headquarters. This government is very much aware of the appalling conditions under which our police officers have to

work. All these officers want to do is the very best they can for the people of Gympie and the surrounding area. This decision to once again delay the actual construction of an alternative building is once again a slap in the face for the people of Gympie.

The budget allocation towards the Queensland Police Service is a bit poor, only providing 300 new police and 60 new civilian staff. The provision of more police, when one considers the area of Queensland, is way under par. We need more public servant positions in the stations to allow the police to get out of the office and back onto the beat, which is where they belong.

It is good to see that this government has been familiarising itself with One Nation policies for improving the employment prospects of its youth by offering school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. Not all young people want to go on to tertiary studies, which means that in many instances those who do not are left without a future or any real hope for employment. At least with the re-introduction of apprenticeships these kids will have a vocation and a solid future and career. This commitment to Queensland's youth is a positive step, particularly for regional and rural youth, and will enable them to stay closer to their towns and families.

One other great disappointment for my electorate is the fact that, even though the Minister for Health has been made aware of the problems facing the Gympie public hospital, it has offered \$12.7 million to upgrade the Nambour Hospital whilst Gympie had to settle for a review. The budget describes how there are funds dedicated to enhancing the new Caloundra Health Service in order to improve operating efficiency and effectiveness at the Nambour Hospital. What about Gympie? Nambour is only overworked because they are getting so many patients who could and should be treated at Gympie Hospital.

It seems that the public's outcry and needs are irrelevant when it comes to the allocation of funding. The Labor Party is obviously not looking at winning the seat of Gympie in a real hurry. Please do not get me wrong, I do not begrudge the redevelopment of Nambour Hospital's operating theatres, emergency department or intensive care unit. However, I do resent the fact that another hospital may be receiving an upgrade at the expense of, or detriment to, my electorate's hospital.

I note that one of the highlights of the budget is the upgrading of staff accommodation in regional and rural Queensland to encourage recruitment of medical staff to those areas. Is this a joke? I think it will take a bit more than prettying up staff accommodation in order to address the issue of the lack of medical staff in regional hospitals. Whilst still addressing the health section of the budget, I say that the additional \$20 million which has been allocated over a two-year period to reduce the waiting lists for elective surgery is eagerly received. Only time will tell whether or not acceptable waiting lists will be the outcome.

Continuing on with another disappointing aspect of this budget, considering that the average waiting list for a dental appointment is approximately 18 months, the Gympie public dental clinic, which is situated at the Gympie Hospital, has been excluded from the list of 'high demand' areas that will receive the additional \$5 million aimed at reducing waiting lists. The waiting lists in other areas must be pretty astronomical if 18 months is not classed as an unreasonable waiting time.

The only people in my electorate who may be considered according to a new service model are indigenous people, refugees and the elderly, so at least a single figure percentage of my electorate may see that the time they spend on waiting lists may reduce—but with this government's record maybe not. Although there are only a few specific advantages in this budget for the electorate of Gympie, those which it has received are much appreciated, and I am sure I say that on behalf of the whole electorate. This budget as a whole is not one I would have expected from this self-proclaimed can-do government. Such an uninspiring budget comes as quite a surprise. Nevertheless, I do hope that some of the statewide initiatives and funding do manage to reach my very exceptional electorate of Gympie.

In closing, I ask the government not to treat my electorate as though it and its people are insignificant. The government had a great opportunity with the development of this budget to show Queenslanders that it is a fair and considerate government which treats all Queenslanders—no matter what their political leanings—with the same amount of respect. Well, Mr Beattie and his government have let down approximately 35,000 Queenslanders and shown that they are insincere because the words 'I am here for all Queenslanders' are simply empty rhetoric.

Mr PURCELL (Bulimba—ALP) (6.30 p.m.): It gives me pleasure to rise to speak in the debate on the appropriation bills. I congratulate the Treasurer, Terry Mackenroth, on his first Queensland budget. On behalf of the people of Bulimba, I thank the government for its ongoing

commitment to the port of Brisbane motorway. Major roads in the Bulimba electorate include Wynnum Road, Creek Road and Lytton Road. All of these roads carry a tremendous number of large trucks and heavy vehicles day and night. Many of these vehicles are travelling to and from the port of Brisbane.

Once the motorway is completed, residents will directly benefit from this road. With many of those heavy vehicles using the port of Brisbane motorway instead of local roads, the noise and air pollution in our local suburbs will be dramatically reduced and our local roads will be safer for motorists and pedestrians. As Queenslanders we will all benefit from the boost to our export opportunities. There will also be employment opportunities during the construction stage of the new port road. The Bulimba oxbow at Murarrie will also benefit during construction, with work being done to rehabilitate it in conjunction with the Bulimba Creek catchment group.

I am extremely pleased to note that money has been allocated to purchase land for the construction of a new fire station. The existing fire station is antiquated and past its use-by date. Modern fire trucks cannot fit through the doorway and the working conditions for the firemen are atrocious. The building is heritage listed and nothing can be done to upgrade it. I also acknowledge the \$2.5 million allocated for the design, construction and development of the Murarrie industrial park. I trust that designers take into consideration the fact that this suburb is a combination of industry and residential and ensure that any new development needs to enhance and work in with the living environment of the residents.

Last but not least, I acknowledge the \$960,000 in total funding for the public housing capital works program in Bulimba, which is a proverbial drop in the bucket. This has come about because of the continual squeeze being placed on the state housing budget by the Howard federal government, which is no friend to my constituents in public housing or those awaiting placement in public housing. Many of the department's properties in the Bulimba electorate are aged and are badly in need of an upgrade. Similarly, I believe the department needs to purchase and construct a lot more stock in the Bulimba area in order to meet the ever-increasing waiting lists while the Howard government continues to take money away from the state housing portfolios and bleed them dry. One of the most basic needs of people for housing is being ignored by the present federal government.

For a change of pace I will get off the subject of the stingy Howard government and talk about something a bit more pleasant. In this the International Year of the Volunteer so many stories are coming to light of people who have dedicated their time and lives to assisting others. The role of the volunteer in our community is as varied as the volunteers themselves. The majority of volunteers are very modest people. It is sometimes difficult to find out all that they give to the community, because it is not in their nature to talk about what they do. One such person is Kevin Francis McNeill of Morningside. For many years Kevin has done voluntary work for both charities and lawn bowls. His history of voluntary work began in 1938. At 14 years of age Kevin became a member of the St Vincent de Paul Society. He assisted with caring for the sick and elderly. Being a volunteer at such an early age obviously instilled in him a life of giving and caring for others.

In 1953 Kevin McNeill was involved with the seaman's refuge in Townsville. In 1959 he was one of the founders of the Commonwealth Public Service Credit Union. In 1978 he was associated with the Madonna House women's refuge in Brisbane. In his spare time, Kevin took up the game of lawn bowls. He became an accredited RQBA coach in 1977 and has spent over 200 hours coaching and supervising school pupils from Balmoral State High School. Kevin is also an accredited umpire at levels 1 and 2. He is the 1999 president and past president of the Gateway District Bowls Association. At 77 years of age, he is still actively involved with the Balmoral Heights Memorial Bowls Club as well as a regular volunteer at the Bulimba and Districts Meals on Wheels. Kevin has given a lifetime to helping others. On behalf of the community, I extend to Kevin a sincere thankyou.

As there are a number of other people I want to mention, I seek leave to have my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Another person I would like to pay my respects to is Beulah (Tibby) Anderson, a lovely lady.

Tibby has been associated with the Bulimba State School for approximately ten years. During this time she has contributed a great deal in a quite a range of areas. She is a quiet but relentless achiever. During her time as a cleaner at the Bulimba school, Tibby would go to great lengths to ensure that rooms were spotless even to the extent of returning after her normal working hours to maintain her standards. During this time Tibby also undertook the responsibility for much of the upbringing of her 3 grand-daughters. Sadly their mother, Tibby's daughter in law, had died of heart and lung disease, leaving Tibby to adopt the role of parent/caregiver. In this role she enthusiastically involved herself in many

voluntary school activities. She is widely recognised by the Bulimba School community for her tireless efforts. Tibby's most significant achievement recently has been her implementation and monitoring for the past 2 years of the "Stop, Drop and Go" zones for which she won a Road Safety Award.

Although Tibby's grand daughters no longer attend the Bulimba School she continues her association with the Bulimba School to this day. Tibby is the fundraising coordinator and has initiated many ventures to raise money for the school. She has convened and worked on fetes, stalls, functions and fundraising drives. Tibby's infectious enthusiasm and organisation skills have been invaluable. Tibby has organised parents and provided catering for school functions and the running of special food days to raise the funding for the School's Peer Support Program. As a parent representative, Tibby has supported the various classroom teachers, organised rosters, accompanied excursions and helped in the classroom in a variety of ways including sewing, reading and cooking.

Tibby is a prolific volunteer in the school tuckshop and is the current President of the Tuckshop Committee. She is responsible for the printing and distribution of the school newsletter and helps the school band at concerts and rehearsals. Tibby's voluntary work has improved the community by raising much needed funds to purchase resources for the children attending the Bulimba State School. Her infectious enthusiasm has made Tibby readily recognisable by children, parents and staff of the Bulimba State School. Tibby serves as a role model to others for the energy and commitment she constantly displays. I know I can say this to you Tibby, thank you on behalf of the past, present and future children attending Bulimba School for a job well done.

We hope you can keep up the good work for many years to come.

I would now like to mention a husband and wife team—Bob and Lynne Brown. Bob and Lynne are more commonly known in the Cannon Hill area as Mr and Mrs Football. Bob is President of the Cannon Hill Stars Junior Football Club and Lynne is the Secretary. They have both held these positions for 10 years and have made the decision that this year will be their last. Bob played for the Cannon Hill Stars Junior Football Club as a young fellow of about 9 or 10 years of age. When he returned to Brisbane to live after several years in Sydney he decided to give something back to the club which gave him so much enjoyment as a youngster. Similarly after being a parent of players and a club supporter some years ago, Lynne decided she wanted to assist the club and volunteered to take on the job as Secretary. As well as being the President of the Club, Bob is a qualified junior referee and a Member of the Brisbane Junior Referees Club. Bob is also on the Board of Directors for the Junior League. For the past five (5) years, Bob has been the manager of the Brisbane Representative Side. He has managed the 13, 14 and 17 year old sides. This involves taking the representative side to a predetermined country town somewhere in Queensland and participating in local football carnivals. This year the team is off to Warwick on the 1st July. Naturally in order to do this, Bob has to take his holidays. Wednesday nights after work he goes down to the club to mark the fields for the weekend games. He also spends his evenings cleaning up the grounds before and after the games and on training nights to make sure that the playing grounds remain safe for the players. There are also meetings during the football season which they need to attend.

The work for Bob and Lynne doesn't just start and finish with the football season. Jerseys need to be ordered in November. December they begin preparing the promotional material. January the newsletters and recruitment drive starts before the sign on day in February. Coaches have to be interviewed. And all this before the season starts. All up Bob and Lynne would each spend some 25-30 hours every week devoted to junior football. This is a big ask for anyone to give up this amount of time and commitment to unpaid work, particularly after working a full day. Although it does have an up side. After all Bob did get to marry the Club Secretary. You are both going to be sadly missed at the Cannon Hill Stars Junior Football Club. I have no doubts that you will both remain the Club's strongest and most dedicated supporters. I thank you on behalf of everyone for all that you have given to junior rugby league. You both know how important it is that our children get the opportunity to play a team sport.

Before I leave the Cannon Hill football club behind, I wish to point that they have been very fortunate in having such great volunteers. Along with the Browns, the club was also fortunate in having the support and services of Norm Johnson. Sadly Norm passed away on the 1st May, 2001, but he has left us with a lasting legacy—his photographs. Norman Selwyn Johnson was born at Kuridalla, Queensland, on 9th October 1909. He was the tenth of thirteen surviving children. Norm was always very artistic and was gifted with a talent for painting and pottery. However it was in photography that he found his greatest expression. Norm combined his love of photograph with his passion for sports. In particular rugby league. So many of our sporting legends grew up in the Cannon Hill area and have been immortalised on film by Norm—a very young Wally Lewis, Bob Lindner and Paul Kahl are just a few of the famous faces in the hundreds of photographs on the walls of the Cannon Hill Stars Junior Football Club.

From the late 50s, early 60s Norm attended every home game and photographed the young players in action. Norm would then go home, develop his photos and give them to the youngsters and the club. Swimming stars such as Tracey Wickham, Lisa Curry-Kenny and Suzie Baumer were also photographed by Norm in their primary school days. Last year I had the great pleasure of presenting Norm with the Australian Sports Medal. It was one of the proudest moments of Norm's life to receive the official recognition and I know he treasured the medal. He always took the perfect picture and showed people in their best light. Norm always had a kind word and an encouraging gesture for young players. With the photographs Norm has left us with a legacy which is irreplaceable. His talent, kindness and generosity have ensured that he will be long remembered and respected by this and generations yet to come. Vale Norm. A highly distinguished effort and a grand life innings of 91 years celebrated.

Another married couple who have devoted their life to supporting and assisting their sport is Paddy and Carmel Heath. Paddy and Carmel are an institution as far as netball is concerned in the Cannon Hill area. At a time when most people are sitting back, enjoying their retirement and relaxing, Paddy and Carmel can be seen spending their days working hard to keep the netball courts in an immaculate condition. As the courts are directly across the road from my Electorate Office, I can personally testify to the long hours and hard work they put in.

Netball is the most popular sport in Queensland for girls and women and has thousands of participants. Paddy & Carmel have worked very hard over the years to raise funds so all those of girls and women who wished to participate in the sport are able to do so. Their courts are Cannon Hill are of the highest standard. One of their more recent acquisitions is the installation of the lighting to enable players to enjoy their games in the evenings. What you have both achieved for netball over the years is an absolutely credit to you. I extend my thanks for a job well done.

Another person who has earned the right to sit back and relax after a life time of hard work, but instead chooses to voluntarily dedicate his time to helping others, is my good mate Ernie Adsett. Many members here may remember Ernie from his days at the old Storeman & Packers Union. Ernie retired from the Union many years ago, but he hasn't lost any of that full-on enthusiasm he was well known for in his prime. Ernie is the President of the Colmslie sub Branch of the RSL and Assistant Treasurer of the Colmslie RSL. Ernie has dedicated his retirement years to looking after our returned servicemen and women and does an admirable job. Every year Ernie and I go around all the schools in the Bulimba Electorate prior to Anzac Day to impress upon the future generation the importance of Anzac Day. Ernie's enthusiasm and energy is boundless when it comes to helping RSL members and their families. Well done mate.

Laurie Latham, the Administer for the Balmoral Uniting Community Centre is another excellent example of people who have a lifetime of giving. From 1954—62, Laurie was the Secretary of the Morningside State School P & C Association. Although his children no longer attended the school, Laurie continued on as Secretary to see the completion of the swimming pool project. At the same time he was Vice President of the Balmoral High School Association.

In 1980 Laurie retired from the Queensland Government Printing Office. Rather than sit back and enjoy his retirement, he became a volunteer at the Balmoral Uniting Community Centre. In 1993 he was appointed Administrator of the Centre. He position he still holds today. Although now in his 80s Laurie works in excess of 50 hours a week and receives a salary equivalent to 16 hours a week. He has given almost 50 years of voluntary service to the community. He is a true gentleman and the backbone of the Community Centre. I know that the Brisbane Sailing Squadron has a large number of volunteers who freely give of their time to teach the club's new and younger members sailing skills.

The following people:

Chris Anderson, Jenny Anderson, Marine Gallagher, Dean Horton, Daniel Jack, Claire Kreis, Belinda Luscombe, Joanne Luscombe, Emily Mahoney, Sarah Newton, Heather O'Keefe, Bronwyn Seto, Vivien Seto, Grant Steinback are all to be congratulated for their commitment.

I am sure my fellow members are well aware of the huge time commitment so many people give to their local bowls club. In the Bulimba Electorate, I have five Lawn Bowls Club—Balmoral, Balmoral Heights, Camp Hill, Cannon Hill and Norman Park. Each Club has a Ladies and a Mens Club. Most of these clubs are struggling to keep their heads above water which places a greater emphasis on the role of volunteers to keep the clubs going.

Mr PURCELL: Every club has extremely dedicated people who work very hard for their individual clubs. I am hesitant to start naming names for the fear of missing someone, but I thank each and every one of them. Their work is very much appreciated. These people are only a very small percentage of the volunteers who work so tirelessly to ensure that life or leisure time is better for their friends, neighbours and the community as a whole. None of them do it to be thanked, nor do they seek any public recognition for what they give. I dread to think what life would be like without them and other like-minded people. These people give so unselfishly of themselves, their expertise and time to assist others. Whether it be in the area of sport, health, education or general quality of life, all of us have had our lives enriched because of their commitment and dedication.

Hon. K. W. HAYWARD (Kallangur—ALP) (6.36 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to rise in this debate to speak in support of the budget. It is a budget which brings real results for the people of the Kallangur electorate, delivering on commitments made before the last state election. Kallangur residents will benefit from this budget from resources and funding which is being pumped visibly back into our local area. Improved educational opportunity is a fundamental plank of the Smart State strategy, and improved educational opportunities are delivered in Kallangur through the capital works program. Consistent with the commitments made during the state election, additional teaching buildings will be completed at Burpengary State School and Morayfield East State School. The population growth in the Caboolture shire and the Pine Rivers shire has exceeded even the most optimistic predictions over recent years.

Prior to the last redistribution, Kallangur had more electors than any other electorate in Queensland. Recognising that population growth, the previous Beattie government started the Narangba Valley State High School, and what a great success it has been in our local community. This budget provides funding to complete stage 2A and substantially complete stage 3 of that school. Next year that high school will comprise grades 8, 9 and 10. In just its second year of operation, the Narangba Valley State High School has become a beacon of learning in the local area. Congratulations are due to the school principal, Mr Ken Kennedy, and his dedicated staff. They have harnessed the support of the local community and local businesses to be involved in the school. This school is an example of the Beattie Labor government's vision for Queensland as a dynamic and progressive Smart State. It is a practical example—developing students in Narangba and Burpengary for their future and creating a knowledge culture in these young people. Even though it has only been in existence for a couple of years, the achievements at Narangba Valley State High School go further than Queensland. The whole of Australia wants to know about it. The school has hosted visits from the federal Treasurer, Peter Costello; opposition leader, Kim Beazley; and shadow education minister, Michael Lee. They go there because of the outstanding school knowledge culture. In the same area of Narangba and consistent with the

population growth, the budget proposes the construction of a double-storey teaching block at the Jinibara State School. This block will be well received by the local community.

During the last election campaign, an issue arose at the Kallangur State School over staffing of the school crossing. I was pleased to see that my representations meant that funding for a school crossing supervisor was found. I congratulate the Transport Minister, Steve Bredhauer, and the Premier for setting aside funding for 100 new school crossing supervisors throughout Queensland. That fulfils yet another election commitment.

I have already spoken about the growth that is occurring in Narangba in my electorate. To ensure an effective response capability, a new ambulance station will commence construction. This will see an improvement in ambulance response times for people in Burpengary and Narangba. I campaigned on this issue during the state election and I am pleased to see the matter being addressed so promptly.

I am pleased that funding is identified in the budget to complete the six and eight laning of the Bruce Highway to Dohles Rocks Road. Residents who travel over that section of the highway cannot help but be aware of the roadworks. I have spoken many times in the parliament about the need for this upgrade, and I can assure the minister that it is very welcome. Traffic is slowed, particularly at the duplication of the Pine Rivers Bridge, and I urge highway road users to show patience. When the project is completed, traffic flows from the Kallangur electorate will be improved dramatically. I welcome the funding provided for this project by the federal government, and I urge it to set aside sufficient funds to efficiently proceed with the Bruce Highway upgrade to the Bribie Island turn-off.

The Bruce Highway plays a vital role in the wellbeing of the Pine Rivers and Caboolture communities. Road users in this area pay a proportionally higher sum of petrol excise, and they deserve and demand that the excise moneys they have paid be devoted to the Bruce Highway upgrade. Population growth in the Pine Rivers and Caboolture shires demands action on this project sooner rather than later.

This budget sets aside the final amount for the completion of the upgrade of Petrie-Caboolture rail signalling. When this project is completed, together with the completion of the third track from Northgate to Petrie, more trains and faster services will be available to local people. This has been a huge project, and with its finalisation our local area will be able to really reap the benefits of a fast, reliable and frequent rail transport service.

I now turn to the overall picture of the budget. Economic growth for 2000-01 in Queensland was three and a half per cent. For this year the budget estimate is four per cent. That figure is an estimate based on core assumptions—most importantly, responsible fiscal policy comprising competitive tax rates and mixes of taxes and spending focused on growth and, secondly, a supportive business environment created by the government. This budget meets those core assumptions and in so doing generates confidence in the Queensland community—confidence to invest, confidence for people to start a business, confidence for business of all sizes to employ and confidence for people to spend their money. Confidence directly drives and determines the state growth rates. It is important for government to set the scene but, in the end, if people and investors do not have confidence then results will not be achieved.

Members can reflect on what the federal coalition has done in the last 12 months to dampen and finally smash confidence in our community. National economic growth slowed last year. The federal government managed to combine interest rate increases with the introduction of a new tax—the goods and services tax. It combined that with policy inertia over petrol prices and the effect of the GST on petrol excise.

Members can see what policy and decision-making inertia occurred with respect to GST compliance. It went on and on for months. Members will remember the dithering over business activity statements and their preparation and lodgment, along with the pressure placed on prices by the GST-induced inflation. The GST created a new measure of inflation. We now have the ongoing rate of inflation and headline inflation. So depending on who is talking about it, they refer to either the ongoing rate of inflation or the headline rate of inflation.

Members can see the lack of confidence in the federal coalition government demonstrated by the rest of the world. It is there for everyone to see. In April this year the Australian dollar descended to the historic low of US47.8c. Who would have thought just 12 months earlier that that would have happened? Very few people would have thought there would be a collapse in a currency the likes of which we saw. I think that reflects a serious international judgment on the

federal coalition and its economic mismanagement. The federal government also demonstrated that it cannot manage a monitoring role over the insurance industry, as seen by the HIH collapse.

In order to achieve the proposed state growth rate of four per cent, the budget papers emphasise the importance of maintaining investor and consumer confidence. The Beattie government has put the right settings in place locally, but Queensland's economic growth is linked directly to the national economy and our trading partners. If the federal coalition continues to stumble along as it has—policy inertia followed by knee-jerk reactions—then investor and consumer confidence will decline and the state growth target of four per cent will simply not be met. And what a tragedy that would be. The Beattie government gets the policy settings right only to miss out because of confidence-sapping behaviour and dithering by the federal coalition. I congratulate the Treasurer, Terry Mackenroth, on his first budget in this Beattie Labor government.

Mrs REILLY (Mudgeeraba—ALP) (6.46 p.m.): I am happy to rise to support these appropriation bills and this budget. I congratulate the Treasurer and his staff on the delivery of their first budget. On behalf of the people of Mudgeeraba, I thank the Premier and the Treasurer for their commitment to the Gold Coast and to Mudgeeraba. I reiterate how proud I am to be part of this Beattie government and to be working with this, my very first budget as a member.

I find this budget inspiring, even though others may not, because it addresses all of the issues dear to my heart. It reflects the very reasons I am a Labor member. It puts people first—families, young people and people with disabilities—and its focus is on the fundamentals of life: education, supported accommodation, health, jobs and other areas of social concern. All too many of us take these things for granted. While the media may find housing, disability support and classrooms boring, I certainly do not.

I congratulate the Education Minister on her delivery of a record education budget. Education will be the focus of my speech. A record \$4.3 billion, including \$253 million in capital investment, has been allocated for education. As a member for a Gold Coast hinterland seat which has been experiencing unchecked massive development over the last decade, and indeed longer, I welcome the government's commitment to addressing education needs in my electorate and adjoining electorates.

Most of my time since my election has been taken up in dealing with education issues in the electorate because I am facing a legacy of neglect and poor planning which has resulted in a situation whereby local primary schools are overflowing. Even new high schools, such as the one at Robina, are bursting at the seams. A hinterland seat of 26,000 residents has no state high school. I have been visiting my local schools, both public and private, and talking to parents, teachers, principals and students about education resources in the area. I have found that they have been crying out for added facilities to meet demand—not only for the past four months since they have had my attention but for a lot longer.

The response to my visits to schools and my talks to parents has been overwhelmingly positive. It is because they cannot believe their local member has actually made the effort to meet with them, to come to them and to see their problems first-hand. My school communities feel that their approaches in recent years have fallen on deaf ears. They watched as development progressed, population grew and enrolments exploded. They watched as wealthy local private schools grew fatter and better and built indoor swimming pools and Olympic-sized gymnasiums. They watched as their own children ran through pelting rain to reach demountable classrooms where only the day before their lunches sat putrefying in the sun.

They watched as the former member for Nerang sat back and watched, probably with a grin on his face like the one the member for Callide now has. Following a two-hour tour of a local school recently, the principal told me—as we had morning tea in the junior classroom due to the lack of administration facilities to house all teachers effectively—that he only saw the former member when the member had wanted to test the political atmosphere of his local schools, that is, just before an election. And he was not there to make promises or to see what needed to be done; he was there to crunch his numbers—something he obviously did not do very well recently.

When the former member was in government and was the Minister for Public Works, his Liberal colleague—is the member for Callide remembering who it is now?—in the neighbouring seat of Robina was the Education Minister. And this is the legacy that they have left us and me to deal with. That was the priority they placed on education: none. And that is why there are only three of them left in opposition today.

The Beattie government has a different approach to education. It recognises that access to a good quality education is vital and is the right of every child, not just those whose parents can afford it—a truth that the federal government and that destroyer of education and opportunity, Dr David Kemp, would do well to heed. However, in the interests of saving time—because I could spend a lot of time on this—I will not expand on my views regarding the Howard government's abysmal neglect of education at all levels and will return instead to more local matters—something the former member was against doing.

Mr Seeney: Come on. I'm enjoying it.

Mrs REILLY: That is good. This is an education for the member for Callide. Education lies at the very heart of the Beattie government's vision to make Queensland the Smart State, and this record budget demonstrates a firm commitment to achieving that vision. My constituents have made it quite clear that education is their first priority.

Mr Reeves interjected.

Mrs REILLY: I am sorry, I did not hear the interjection from the member for Mansfield, but I am sure it was very useful. Recently, I tabled a petition of some 450 signatures from the parents and citizens of Mudgeeraba Creek Primary School.

Mr Seeney: Where is Mudgeeraba?

Mrs REILLY: Mudgeeraba Creek is—

Mr Seeney: Where is it? Tell us where it is.

Mrs REILLY: I am just telling the member that it is on Springbrook Road. It is a fairly new school. It is a beautiful school. It is very attractive. It has many wonderful qualities on which I will elaborate just for the member for Callide. It was built originally to take pressure off other local schools that were bursting at the seams, such as William Duncan and the Mudgeeraba State School. It has, in fact, despite its completely inappropriate location—carved into the side of a hill some 500 metres from overhead powerlines—become the school of choice for many local parents. And with growth in the area, it has actually done nothing to relieve the pressure on nearby schools but has taken on a whole population of its own. Still, it is a happy and proud and very aesthetically pleasing school.

Mr Seeney: How many kids go there?

Mrs REILLY: About 980. It is known for the quality of its teaching staff, community spirit and sporting and academic achievement. A recent book fair and concert put on by the students attracted thousands of local community members and showcased the depth of talent within the school grounds. The petition outlined the need for the completion of long-term temporary buildings and asked that attention be paid to covered walkways, decking and safety issues relating to some pole structure classrooms. I personally collected the petition and inspected the site while touring the entire school. At my behest, the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing, who has considerable experience of school facilities, also inspected the site, and I thank him for his prompt and proper response.

Mr Seeney: He doesn't do a bad job, does he?

Mrs REILLY: That is right. He does a brilliant job. But the achievement of a budget allocation to address these pressing needs is a credit to the passion and dedication of the school's P&C and to the Education Minister, her staff and staff of the department. Mudgeeraba Creek school will receive almost \$600,000 in capital works spending to provide additional relocatable buildings and classrooms and to develop additional land to meet ever-growing demand as well as build the covered walkways requested by parents and students.

Other local schools will also benefit from this budget, with a further allocation of almost \$200,000 each to Worongary and William Duncan schools for additional classrooms and for the Numinbah Valley environmental education centre, which is a unique learning environment.

Mr Seeney: Where's that?

Mrs REILLY: It is in the Numinbah Valley. It will also benefit from over \$100,000 to replace amenities.

Most importantly, the issue of providing education infrastructure for this rapidly growing population will be addressed through the development of a new school at Reedy Creek or Bonogin. \$270,000 has been allocated this year to develop the new primary school, which is estimated to cost \$9 million and will open in 2003.

Other issues which have received attention in my electorate—and which the media may also consider boring but I certainly do not—are roads and public housing, with a \$4.4 million allocation for the completion of the realignment of four lanes at Broadbeach Road and Goodings Corner and over \$200,000 in total funds for public housing's capital works programs in my electorate.

These are again issues which I have been working hard to address and which are important to my constituents. I thank the Transport Minister and the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing once again for their commitment to addressing areas of real need within my electorate. It gives me great pleasure to support the Appropriations Bills because they deliver a budget which has responded to the people of Queensland, which has resulted from listening to the people of Queensland, and which has, for the first time in many years, responded to the needs of the people in my electorate. I commend the bills to the House.

Mr REEVES (Mansfield—ALP) (6.55 p.m.): Madam Deputy Speaker—

Mr Briskey interjected.

Mr REEVES: Yes, this is my last speech as a single man. I must admit to the House that, stupidly, on Wednesday, due to circumstances beyond my control, I drove in to Parliament House. I was stuck in the traffic on the freeway instead of being on the world-class South East Busway.

Mr Briskey: What, the No. 1 ticket holder?

Mr REEVES: As the No. 1 ticket holder I was ashamed of myself. While I was upset at my stupidity, the journey was made bearable by the radio comments about the budget. What I heard was that it was a budget for the grassroots, a budget for the basics—health, education and jobs—and a budget for the Labor heartland. And as a Labor member, one could not ask for better headlines to prove to me that the Deputy Premier had done a first-class job in delivering his first budget. I only hope that my performance on Saturday will be as good as the performance by the Treasurer in his first budget.

This budget is definitely about the basics. This budget is definitely about the basics for Mansfield: health, education, jobs, housing, crime prevention, transport and main roads. The reducing number of patients waiting for elective surgery and oral health services, the \$35.7 million for the Princess Alexandra Hospital redevelopment and the \$7.5 million for the Logan Central community health centre are the key initiatives of the budget from which the residents of the Mansfield electorate will benefit. I notice the Minister for Health in the chamber. I congratulate her on getting those initiatives into the budget, especially the \$5 million in oral health services, which will have a major bearing.

Mrs Edmond: A smile on your face.

Mr REEVES: With a smile on my face. This budget shows the Labor government's commitment to health, with a record recurrent \$4.06 billion allocated, as well as \$364 million for the capital works program.

Education lies at the heart of the Beattie government's vision to make Queensland the Smart State. Our government has delivered a record \$43 billion to education in Queensland, including \$253 million for capital investment and a 9.1 per cent increase in state funding to Queensland state schools. There is a total of \$732,289 in total capital spending on education in the Mansfield electorate. This includes the initial \$444,380 of the \$769,000 allocated for the Mansfield State High School renewal program; the initial \$70,500 of the \$141,000 allocated for the admin upgrade at the Mansfield State High School, which was an election commitment delivered; \$150,000 for a single space relocatable and the hire of temporary accommodation at the Mansfield State School; and \$51,009 to complete the construction of the covered area at Wishart State School, which was a commitment that former Education Minister Dean Wells, now the Environment Minister, gave to the people of Wishart in September. That covered area and activity centre, which will be opened in the next couple of months, are vitally important for the kids at the Wishart State School because they need a place to hold their assemblies. I know that some of the cabinet ministers have seen the performance of the Wishart State School at the community cabinet meeting held in the electorate in September. Now their performance will be even greater, because they will have that covered area.

Further spending in the electorate includes the initial \$35,000 of the \$350,000 allocated to refurbish the Mount Gravatt East State School. Other education highlights which will have a major benefit to my electorate include the extra \$22.8 million for students with disabilities, including \$15 million for teachers and teacher aides, and the \$18.2 million boost to IT for students and

teachers, so that by the end of 2001 every Queensland state school will be connected to the Internet. A total of 135 additional teachers will be employed in 2001-02 as part of our commitment to an additional 800 teachers over four years, and \$50 million will be provided for the Triple R maintenance program over three years.

Sitting suspended from 7.00 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.

Mr REEVES: This will be the second part of my final speech as a single man. Before dinner I was talking about the benefits of this budget for education. It is probably appropriate that at dinnertime I went to the retirement function for Alan Druery, a constituent and also a close family friend of my mum and dad. I went to school with Alan's son. I congratulate Alan on his contribution to Catholic education and his major impact on education in general. As the minister said today in her ministerial statement, all members appreciate Alan's efforts. I congratulate him and wish him a happy retirement, even though he will go and work for the Archbishop for a period.

Under this budget the Queensland government will create a \$100 million Smart State Research Facility Fund to help overcome the shortfall in research and development investment in Australia. The new fund will invest in world-class research facilities and provide an opportunity for Queensland industries to improve their competitive advantage through innovation. This is the latest step in our commitment to ensuring that Queensland is the Smart State of Australia. It complements the government's \$270 million biotechnology strategy, which began in 1999.

When we talk about the Smart State, TAFE is very important. It is good to see the Minister for Employment in the chamber. The 2001 state budget allocates \$43.2 million for training delivery at the Moreton Institute of TAFE. It provides \$885,000 to commence the refurbishment and upgrade of facilities at the Mount Gravatt campus. I have had a look at this campus. It is world renowned for its fashion students. The facilities in which they learn certainly need to be refurbished. This upgrade will contribute to the positioning that the Mount Gravatt campus has as the centre of excellence for engineering, automotive and fashion studies. A further \$515,000 has been allocated to provide refurbished office accommodation at the Bayside campus. I must compliment the Bayside campus. I am a former graduate of the Moreton Institute at Bayside when it was the old Redlands Community College. What a great institute. Other budget investments for the Moreton Institute of TAFE include \$393,000 to purchase major equipment and \$329,000 for minor works. The institute has campuses at Mount Gravatt, Bayside, Wynnum and the city as well as skills shops at the Carindale and Alexandra Hills shopping centres.

The budget allocation for the Brisbane south and Gold Coast region in the area of employment and training includes \$1.46 million to assist an estimated 640 people through a community training partnerships project. This program funds communities to identify their current and future employment needs and to purchase the appropriate training. There is \$5.45 million for the Community Jobs Plan projects that will provide an estimated 471 long-term unemployed people with paid work experience.

One such Community Jobs Plan is being coordinated by the Mount Gravatt Training Centre. They had one program last year for about \$155,000, and they have been approved for another project in a similar amount. For the member for Mount Gravatt—the Minister for Families—and me, this is one of our really great achievements in our last term. We were lucky enough that the Mount Gravatt Training Centre came on board. We got the community groups together. The outcome was many projects that are benefiting our whole community. We have had improvements to the Mount Gravatt Showgrounds as a result of the Community Jobs Plan as well as improvements to Mount Gravatt soccer, Mount Gravatt East State School, Mount Petrie and Southside Community Care. This will be ongoing. There are other groups. I know that St Catherine's, where I am getting married, is involved in it as well. Mansfield State School is looking at being involved, as are a number of other community groups. It is a great program because not only does it train the long-term unemployed but also there is a major benefit at the end for the local community. All members should get their local communities involved in this great Community Jobs Plan.

There is an estimated \$600,000 for the new Get Set for Work program, a one-year program to provide intensive employment and training assistance and a wage subsidy to help unemployed early school leavers aged between 15 and 24, and \$500,000 for the new Back to Work program, which provides Jobsearch and introduction information technology training to unemployed mature age people over 45. Since the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative began in October 1998, the Brisbane south and Gold Coast region has received a total of \$41.4 million.

When you talk about training, you talk about Q-Build. The state budget allocation of \$6.2 million guaranteed the trade training future of 398 apprentices currently employed by the Department of Public Works' maintenance arm, Q-Build, including 85 headquartered at Mount Gravatt. Their headquarters is in my electorate. The budget subsidy offsets the cost of Q-Build taking a lead role in building industry training. The trade training takes place right across Queensland, from Thursday Island to the border. That is our commitment to skilling Queenslanders wherever they are. We have 73 apprentices learning their trade in the Brisbane city branch at Milton and 85 apprentices at the Mount Gravatt based Brisbane metropolitan branch. It is a commitment that will pay dividends in the economic returns made through these tradespeople's careers in years to come.

One of the big news items of this budget was the delivery of an election commitment that we gave to the Rochedale South community, a new area that I have in my electorate. That community is set to benefit from the Beattie Labor government's commitment to community policing, with the announcement that it will receive a new police beat—a delivered election commitment. The Police Beat program has been highly successful across Queensland because it has encouraged closer cooperation between the police and the community. I know that the Rochedale South community will welcome this new police facility, which is part of our continuing bid to be tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime. It is a welcome initiative and an example of the Beattie Labor government's continuing support for our region.

Police beats mean that communities can get to know their local police—the old country cop style of policing. It is reassuring for these people to see more police on the beat, and this increased police presence in itself is a great deterrent to crime. I believe the Police Beat program is fostering a cooperative partnership between communities, police and local government. This is a sensible approach because these groups are striving for the same things: the prevention and the reduction of crime.

In the area of Transport and Main Roads, there are some great wins for the electorate of Mansfield. \$1 million has been approved for a federally funded planning study to be undertaken for the upgrading of the Ipswich Motorway to Gateway Motorway section of the National Highway. There is \$2 million for a planning study for the upgrading to six lanes on the federally funded section of the Gateway Motorway between Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road and Nudgee Road. The million-dollar planning study is well overdue. I have been in this House many a time and talked about the problems of Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road and the number of trucks that are using it. The federal member for Moreton does nothing and tries to politicise the issue, rather than getting in and trying to assist and looking for long-term solutions. His quick solutions will not do anything for the people in my area. This study will involve a lot of community consultation, and it is well overdue. I look forward to playing a part in it over the next 12 months.

There is \$1.25 million to complete the asphalt resurfacing on the \$2 million project on the South East Freeway between Gaza Road and Logan Road inbound and to the gateway outbound. There is \$250,000 to install traffic lights at Palmdale Shopping Centre on Logan Road just near the police station. With my office being just around the corner from there, I often see the elderly in particular trying to cross Logan Road to get to Garden City. I fear what is going to happen. These traffic lights will have a huge impact for them, because there are a lot of retirement villages just nearby. There is a \$40,000 provision for an indented bus and car pick-up/set-down area at Rochedale High. This is in conjunction with the Brisbane City Council. A similar facility will be constructed at the Mansfield State School. I know that both of these schools are really looking forward to improving the safety of their students going to and from school.

An amount of \$37,000 has been allocated for the provision of bikeways in various locations within the Redland shire and a similar amount has been allocated for Logan city. In relation to public works, there has been an allocation of \$550,000 for upgrading to ATSI housing. There has been an increase in funding to the Mount Gravatt district Home Assist/Home Secure program—which is a great service and I know that the member for Mount Gravatt has a keen interest in this as well—from \$200,000 to \$370,000. This is a great service for those people, especially elderly people, who do not have the wherewithal to undertake work around their properties such as changing light bulbs or installing security. This is a great service and it is great to see that this budget continues to support it.

There has been an allocation of \$2.4 million for general upgrades of housing in the Brisbane south region and, in the Logan area, an allocation of \$2.6 million. Also the budget contains construction valued at \$460,000 in public works and, in the Mansfield electorate alone, \$771,000 has been allocated to maintenance.

This budget also continues to reform child protection with a further funding boost of \$18.2 million provided for an additional 50 child protection workers. That includes \$5.7 million on a recurrent basis and \$2.5 million non-recurrent funding for child protection, family support and youth justice services. This year's budget operating expenditure for the Department of Families was \$335 million—an increase of \$36.6 million. That shows our commitment to families. An additional \$6.3 million has been allocated to individual packages, increasing the total number of adults who have received support under this program to over 1,000. There is also an expansion of post-school services for 160 young people with high support needs. This budget will work to improve the things that are vital to all Queenslanders, such as health, education, housing and crime prevention, and will also provide opportunities for skills training jobs and economic development.

An area close to my heart, the sport and recreation industry, injects \$1.9 billion a year into the Queensland economy and employs more than 40,000 people. Some members opposite, such as the member for Nanango, have complained about Lang Park. Events held at that stadium will create jobs. When tourists come from far and wide—and even people from the Nanango electorate will come—to attend an event at the stadium, no doubt they will stay in Brisbane for a few days. That means jobs, jobs, jobs. Sports and recreation is an essential part of the Australian way of life, especially in the Sunshine State.

Through initiatives such as those contained in this budget, the Beattie government will work to ensure that Queensland retains its reputation as the sporting capital of Australia. Some of these initiatives include the continuation of the popular Thanks Coach, Thanks Ref campaign, about which I know the Minister for Sport and Deputy Premier is passionate, and \$500,000 for a new initiative to encourage parents to be involved in sports administration. As a former volunteer sports administrator, I know that we must try to convince parents to become more involved in their children's sport because without volunteers children's sport would not be able to continue. This program will include forums, workshops and training, resources, sport and the continued development of coaches, instructors and officials and volunteers. An amount of \$1.5 million has been allocated to a campaign to encourage more people to get up and be active to kick off the push to boost participation in physical activities by five per cent across-the-board over the next five years.

It is my pleasure to congratulate the Treasurer and Deputy Premier on an excellent job in delivering his first budget. In both the Logan paper and the *Courier-Mail* the day after the budget was delivered, it was stated, 'It is a budget for Labor heartland. It is a budget for the basics. It is a budget for the grassroots. It is about health, education, jobs and crime prevention.'

I congratulate the Treasurer on an excellent job. I am sure that the Treasurer and Deputy Premier will present to this House many more budgets in the years to come.

Ms LIDDY CLARK (Clayfield—ALP) (8.44 p.m.): Let me preface my response to the state government's 2001-02 budget by saying how proud and privileged I feel to be a part of such a positive and proactive state budget, my first since being elected to parliament as the member for Clayfield.

Mr Neil Roberts: And we are proud and privileged to have you here, too.

Ms LIDDY CLARK: I thank the member.

As I listened to my good colleague and Treasurer, the Honourable Terry Mackenroth, deliver his first budget on Tuesday, I was reminded of those famous words spoken by former Prime Minister Ben Chifley. In addressing a Labor conference in 1949, Chifley said—

I try to think of the labour movement, not as putting an extra sixpence into somebody's pocket, or making somebody Prime Minister or Premier, but as a movement bringing something better to the people, better standards of living, greater happiness to the mass of the people. We have a great objective—the light on the hill—which we aim to reach by working for the betterment of mankind not only here but anywhere we may give a helping hand.

I believe that Ben Chifley's statement is a poignant one and one that evokes and encapsulates the core principles of Tuesday's budget—a budget that provides for people while allowing them to provide for themselves; a budget that remains faithful to a Labor government's traditional role of investing heavily in capital works while keeping abreast of the future-looking, fast-paced change and innovation brought about by Queensland's buoyant technology sector. In a nutshell, it is a budget that brings something better to the people and offers them a helping hand. This budget is good news for all Queenslanders, whether they live in the city or in the regions. Premier Peter Beattie, presiding over his fourth budget, should be congratulated on extending and enhancing the earlier economic initiatives of his government.

Certainly, the centrepiece of the government's \$19.2 billion budget is its generous investment in the state's Capital Works Program, 58 per cent of which will be spent outside Brisbane. Indeed, capital works programs make up 27 per cent of this year's budget, including a nine per cent increase in funding to Education and six per cent each to Disability Services and Health. Other areas to benefit include the Arts, Primary Industries, Families, Housing and Transport.

In my electorate of Clayfield, I am and I know my constituents will be extremely grateful for the \$11.8 million of funding to complete the Nundah bypass. While being some 10 years in development, the Nundah bypass is an exciting undertaking which is well on track to be completed on time by the end of this year. What is more, every \$1 million spent on roads provides 17 jobs in road building and related industries and, not least, makes the Clayfield community—which stretches from Ascot, Hendra, Hamilton and Clayfield to Pinkenba, Kalinga, Woolloowin, Nundah and Wavell Heights—a safer and more secure place in which to live. Members do not need me to tell them that this is good news for our diverse and positive community. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work and tenacity of the community of Nundah, of the construction workers and of the Transport Minister, Steve Bredhauer, in seeing this important development become a reality.

The bucks do not stop with the bypass. There is \$450,000 for asphalt resurfacing of various sections of the Sandgate subarterial road—an initiative that I am sure my colleagues the member for Nudgee, Neil Roberts, and the member for Sandgate, Gordon Nuttall, will join me in commending.

In the area of public housing, Clayfield will benefit to the tune of over \$1 million for upgrades and maintenance in the electorate—maintenance which, as it is to be carried out by Q-Build, means extra jobs and training for young Queenslanders. On a slightly different note, there was the announcement of \$2 million for glasshouses at Eagle Farm. Make no mistake about it: we have it all in Clayfield—racecourses and restaurants, culture and coffee shops, the latest in high technology and some of the best schools in the state. We also have, as members can see, a burgeoning primary industries sector. Indeed, the \$2 million that I have mentioned will go towards upgrading Eagle Farm's post-entry quarantine facilities. The end result will be a greater capacity and risk control of import plant genetic material critical to agricultural industry development.

In the area of Employment and Training, Clayfield will benefit from a \$227,000 investment in the Brisbane Institute of TAFE, which will facilitate the transfer of trades training to the Gateway Centre for Excellence at Eagle Farm. There is also \$10 million over two years allocated for the Aviation Centre for Excellence. The government will take advantage of Gateway's close proximity to industrial and port precincts and the Gateway Bridge to develop trade product areas there.

I would like to state for the record how proud I am to represent an electorate that will play a role in the Beattie government's \$470 million Breaking the Unemployment Cycle program, an initiative through which the government expects to create 28,000 jobs over the next three years. Once again, this is all about empowering people and extending a helping hand to ensure that they enjoy a happy and secure future. But governments need to offer more than just help; they need to be responsible. There is no greater example of this responsibility than the imperative that we nurture the talents and abilities of our young people.

Part of the art of good government is about getting the small things right—the small things that matter, the small things that affect our lives on a day-to-day basis. Only then can we envision the big things—the big picture, the big idea! After all, to create a knowledge nation we first need to create a knowledge state.

Education—maintaining Queensland's position as the Smart State—has always been one of the hallmarks of the Beattie government, and this year's budget builds on that commitment. I warmly welcome Education Minister Anna Bligh's record \$4.3 billion commitment to Queensland education, which will deliver an 8.9 per cent increase in education funding.

Other initiatives worthy of note include a substantial investment in the state government nursing homes program, increased support for families and continued support for health, including community health centres on Brisbane's north side. The government's commitment to cutting elective surgery and oral health services waiting lists should also be highlighted. Then there is a \$31.6 million increase in the Disability Services Queensland budget, as well as a \$4.5 million boost in funding to the Endeavour Foundation.

Last, but not least, I gracefully accept the \$600,000 that will be made available for one-off grants to arts organisations across Queensland and that has been well received by the sector,

although those who know me well would realise that I believe that no amount of arts funding is ever enough. I say to the Treasurer: we need to dig deeper.

Despite that minor quibble, I take great pleasure in commending this budget to the House. In forecasting four per cent economic growth and two per cent employment growth, the budget is ahead on national projections and delivers for all Queenslanders. This is a budget which succeeds in delivering the security and the services—should I say the helping hand—that the people of our marvellous state deserve. I congratulate the Treasurer on his success and I know the electorate of Clayfield does as well.

Ms LEE LONG (Tablelands—ONP) (8.52 p.m.): After listening to my first budget in this House, I can only say that, from a far northerner's point of view, I am very disappointed with it. I find it uninspiring, mundane and unhelpful at a time when help is most needed.

This budget places much emphasis on information and biotechnology while the Capital Works Program shows the usual overwhelming bias in favour of projects in the south-east corner of the state. Once again our fears are confirmed that, despite its claims to the contrary, this government is really not interested in rural and regional Queensland, and especially the more remote areas such as those that exist in my electorate of Tablelands. There is very little in this budget to enthuse my constituents.

Because governments, both Labor and coalition, state and federal, have by their anti-rural policies caused the demise of our timber and tobacco industries and gutted our once-profitable dairy industry, my electorate has to rely substantially on what is left of our primary industries to survive: industries such as general farming and beef production, fruit and vegetable production, cane farming and pork and poultry production. But where in the budget is there any real assistance that is so badly needed by these industries? I do not see in the budget any help for those Queenslanders. They are rural people who have worked hard all their lives and provided jobs for other Queenslanders on their farms, in mills and factories and in myriad small businesses further along the production chain. Yet, despite their dedication and despite their sacrifices to keep the large cities supplied with goods, they are repaid with a budget such as this—a budget that gives them virtually nothing.

People in rural, regional and remote areas of this state are desperately waiting for a government that is sympathetic to their needs. They want a government that will work with them and not consistently against them. Our farmers are not asking for million-dollar subsidies such as they get in America. All they want is a fair farm gate price that will allow them to gain a reasonable living from the land. They want a return to life as it was before national competition policy was thrust upon them, and before deregulation and government intervention ruined their livelihoods.

But does this budget give any major relief for the rural sector? It does not! Is there any relief for farmers threatened with increased rates for water, the lifeblood of the farming industry? There is not! Is there any further assistance for dairy farmers and tobacco growers driven to desperation by deregulation? There is not! Is there any real assistance for our foundering mining industry? No! As with the rural industry, there is nothing to ease its burden. There is the case of the Golden Circle cannery on the Tablelands. That is not mentioned in the budget. How can industries such as this hope to compete with slave labour countries when our governments drop all tariffs and allow their cheap imports into this country? This is condoning slave labour.

Our public hospitals and dental clinics have been contentious issues for a long time. The Health Minister continually tells us that problems with these facilities are figments of our imagination and that there is nothing wrong with our health system. According to her, there are no waiting lists and there are no shortages of staff, equipment or services. If it is not a figment of our imagination, then it is all the fault of the federal government. However, I always thought that Health was one of the state's main responsibilities.

The extra \$5 million in funding in the budget to increase the availability of oral services in Queensland is but a pittance and will apply to specific clinics only from Bundaberg south. The north misses out yet again. There is nothing in the budget to show real commitment by the Beattie government to encourage the training of more Queensland doctors and dentists to fill the many vacancies that exist in this state with a view to cutting the waiting lists to both public hospitals and dental clinics.

Complaints of cost cutting in public hospitals abound because of lack of funds. I am even getting complaints about the Cairns Base Hospital, which I am sure are caused by a lack of funds, staff and equipment. At the Atherton Hospital, the cost cutting has gone so far as to result in the moving of maternity patients into public wards on occasions. It is becoming ridiculous. Many

tableland maternity patients are sent long distances to Cairns Base Hospital because the services required are now not provided on the tablelands. This causes my constituents considerable inconvenience. We want funding to allow those services to be available in our tableland hospitals.

The budget does provide for new ambulance centres for Atherton, Millaa Millaa and Mount Garnet. Those projects are to be commended but, apart from them, I see no joy for other public health problems.

This budget shows that, once again, the lion's share of real funding is going to the south-east corner. Even though the Transport Minister comes from far-north Queensland, he does not seem to know where the Tablelands electorate is situated. The Premier, our own home-town boy, has all but forgotten the place that gave him his start in life.

The Transport Minister does not care that cane trucks thunder along day and night, 24 hours a day, during the cane harvesting season on roads not built to take the weight of those huge trucks. Also, there seems to be little consideration given to the fact that some of those roads are in the wettest part of Queensland. Some of the road foundations being put down in our wettest areas are far from adequate. People have witnessed new sections of road being patched up almost as soon as the bitumen has dried. At the same time, councils need assistance with funding for their road infrastructure requirements.

I note in the budget details that Petersen Creek bridge in the township of Yungaburra is to be upgraded. This will be a much-needed improvement for the area. Similarly, I see \$10 million has been allocated for detailed planning for a start in 2002-2003 of construction of a new high-level bridge over the South Johnstone River at the South Johnstone sugar mill. I also commend plans for more heavy vehicle warning signs for the Palmerston Highway, as there have been a number of deaths on this section of road.

Apart from those good works, there are many areas that need looking at for road funding. They include the Kennedy Highway west of Mount Garnet, which is now being used extensively by large trucks and semitrailers taking produce south. This part of the highway is still a single lane and locals have expressed considerable concern at the problems of passing. The Gilles Highway from the top of the range to Yungaburra is another road that needs attention, while the Millaa Millaa to Malanda road is again breaking up badly. The Herberton to Irvinebank road could do with upgrading to encourage use of the tourist ring-road route through to Chillagoe, and there is still a section of the Mareeba to Chillagoe road that is not sealed. If tourism is to be the way of the future, then the road network will need extensive funding.

Regarding rail transport, the minister is so tight with his money that he cannot even provide some extra rail wagons to be available on stand-by to carry stock, that is cattle and pigs in particular, to and from Innisfail. Unless wagons are supplied urgently, the viability of cattle saleyards at Mareeba could be threatened. Southern buyers use rail transport as the only viable means of moving stock. Moving them by road is too costly and would only put more heavy vehicles on our roads. Similar problems beset the carriage of pigs between the tablelands and southern centres. Considering that a large portion of the state's wealth is created in rural and regional Queensland, surely our rural people deserve more consideration where rail and road transportation is concerned. After all, most public transport in Brisbane is subsidised.

In conclusion, I believe that this budget proves that the Beattie Labor government is not a government for all Queenslanders. It appears that if people do not live in the Sunshine Coast-Brisbane-Gold Coast strip they may as well not be Queenslanders.

Ms STONE (Springwood—ALP) (9.00 p.m.): I rise to participate positively in tonight's debate. The Beattie Labor government is continuing to provide responsible economic management for all Queenslanders. This budget gets back to basics. It is doing the things that need to be done. There are significant increases in funding to the areas of high priority such as jobs, health, education and police. This budget also focuses on new infrastructure and supporting industries for the future.

Let's look at employment. In the Logan area the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative has been successful; 328 long-term unemployed people have gained up to six months paid work and job experience on 24 community projects, which have received funding totalling \$3.68 million under the Community Jobs Plan. The Community Jobs Plan is yet another excellent initiative that has a direct effect on the people of Springwood. Currently the plan is under way and involves several schools in my electorate.

I had the pleasure of visiting the participants at Springwood State High School. The participants spoke positively of the plan and the new skills they were learning, while the school

community is extremely pleased with the landscaping it has gained. The plan will continue at Springwood Road State School, Springwood Central State School, Kimberley Park State School and Shailer Park State School, all of which will benefit greatly from these projects.

I am pleased that job and training opportunities will continue under the \$470 million Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative. The people of Springwood know that the recent federal budget delivered not one job creation incentive to assist Australia's young people. It is refreshing to see real political will and initiative demonstrated by the Queensland government in relation to youth employment. \$10 million has been allocated to the Youth for the Environment and Communities program that will give young, unemployed people a taste of working in green jobs. This program will link unemployed young people with careers in an industry of growing importance and growing employment opportunities. At the same time they will be participating in projects to improve the natural environments of their local communities.

The Community Jobs Plan and the Youth for the Environment and Local Communities program are just two of the many programs under this government that deliver positive long-term outcomes for the people of Springwood. I will work hard to ensure job opportunities continue to be created for the people of Springwood.

Long-term unemployed people aged over 45 are suffering. Their knowledge and skills are being wasted and we as a community are not gaining the benefits of their talents. The Beattie Labor government is reaching out with a helping hand. The Experience Pays program provides cash incentives to private employers to employ a long-term unemployed person aged 45 years or over for a 12-month period.

I stated in my maiden speech that I am staunchly committed to ensuring that people get the opportunities to study at various levels and at various times throughout their lives, that is, a commitment to lifelong learning. This government will allocate \$726.4 million for vocational education and training services. TAFE Queensland's 16 institutes expect to offer around 350,000 student places in the year 2001-02. Construction of a new campus at Browns Plains is a direct benefit to the people of Springwood. Recently the east-west bus link service was introduced. The people of Springwood will be able to access this facility via this new bus service. The people of Springwood now have a greater choice of where they access the TAFE network.

When we think of training, we think of the Smart State. Recently I visited the Institute for Molecular Bioscience, a centre that is truly representative of the Smart State. It is committed to excellence in research and postgraduate teaching in biology, chemistry and computing. New knowledge industries are vital to our nation's future and growth. \$100 million has been allocated to set up an innovative Smart State research facility fund to facilitate the development of the science, technology and communication infrastructure needed to attract knowledge industries to Queensland.

It is also comforting to many Queenslanders to see the Labor government take a responsible and careful view of new areas of scientific discovery. Biotechnology is raising significant social and ethical issues. This government had declared its support for biotechnology on the basis that it will be scientifically, socially and ethically responsible, and I congratulate the government on the stand that it has taken on this.

One of the duties I enjoy most is going to our schools and talking to students, staff and parents. What is so exciting is that the children I talk to cannot tell me what jobs they will be doing in the future because their jobs do not exist at the moment; we cannot put a name on them at this point. Science, technology and knowledge are advancing faster than ever before in human history. Information technology and telecommunications are rapidly expanding, offering new opportunities and pathways to successful and rewarding careers. That is why it is so important to prepare our children.

An amount of \$3 million over the next three years is provided for the ongoing expansion of the new basics program—a program that consists of an innovative framework of curriculum, teaching and assessment to equip students for the new workplace and industries of the future. This government is addressing the needs of an ever-changing society through the development of responsible education policies such as the QSE-2010. Additional teachers, the \$50 million Triple R maintenance program and a record budget in education are a sign of this government's commitment to build stronger school systems, support our teachers and realise the vision of the Smart State.

When I first became the candidate for the seat of Springwood I visited many of the schools in the electorate. The Springwood Road State School was of particular concern to me. They had

an increasing number of enrolments which had put pressure on the existing facilities. The music program had to be put on the back shelf as no classroom was available to be used as a music room. This was only one of the problems of the overcrowded school. Today I thank the former Minister for Education, the Honourable Dean Wells, and the current minister, the Honourable Anna Bligh, for taking the time to listen to my representations on behalf of the school community. Shortly, the construction of a fantastic music room designed by the school community will begin. That will certainly go a long way to facilitate the development of the many talented music students at the school.

This government is listening. It listened to the concerns of the Springwood Road State School and has delivered \$173,000 for a two-space relocatable building. I know this will go a long way to enhancing the learning environment at the school. I am confident that this grassroots consultation will continue to flourish over the term of this government, and I will continue to be a strong voice for the people of Springwood and represent their issues.

For some time now the St Matthews Primary School at Loganholme has been fighting for the safety of the children entering and leaving the school grounds by crossing Bryants Road. It gives me great pleasure that, once again, the local community has been heard. I stated in my maiden speech and during the time I campaigned that the most important job I have is to listen to the electorate. Today I can say that not only have I listened and represented this school community, but the Minister has also listened. To the Minister for Transport, the Honourable Steve Bredhauer, I say thank you on behalf of the school community.

An amount of \$50,000 has been provided for a bus and car set-down area at St Matthews Primary School. I know that not only are the parents concerned about curriculum and school facilities but the safety of their children is their highest priority. I am proud to be part of a government that has listened to that message. I look forward to working with the minister during the creation of the Springwood South East Busway interchange, which is due to begin later this year. This will improve public transport opportunities for the people of Springwood and will also drastically reduce the travelling time to the city.

The construction of the Springwood interchange will provide employment directly and indirectly due to the increase in travellers to the Springwood business area. The Springwood business area is home to the only two high-rise, privately funded towers in the Pacific Motorway corridor. The bus interchange and new ramp for motor vehicle access will provide direct access to the business district. This business district is also home to the Department of State Development. I am pleased that financial support will be continued for the delivery of workshops and seminars to further develop business opportunities and entrepreneurial businesses. Throughout the state the workshops and seminars proved to be popular, with over 33,000 attendees last year. Another developing area in my electorate is Loganholme. The opening of the Pacific Motorway has led to the development around the Logan Hyperdome and the Loganholme industrial estate. I am sure that this development will continue to prosper under the Beattie Labor government.

The people of Springwood often tell me that they want a safe and secure community. This budget contains a range of law and order initiatives to tackle crime and make our communities safer. The Police Service budget will be the largest in the service's history and the building of the Loganholme Police Station has been well received by the local community. The people of Loganholme, Shailer Park, Cornubia and Logandale will be well serviced by the construction of a new 24-hour police station at Loganholme. This will reduce pressure on existing police officers in the Slacks Creek and Logan districts. With the introduction of another police station, police numbers will further increase in the electorate. This police station is another example of the Beattie Labor government's commitment to tackling crime in the suburbs.

Springwood people are very active and enjoy the sporting and recreation venues across the electorate. This government is putting \$1.5 million into campaigns that will encourage more people, including me, to get up and get active. Funds will also be used to assist community sport and recreation organisations to develop and deliver services. It is with immense joy that I have attended many sporting carnivals, trophy days and sporting events throughout my electorate. Many of these clubs and events are fully dependent upon volunteers. I take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers in the sporting community for contributing to the health and enjoyment of our local community. Because of the contribution of volunteers, I am pleased to see the continuation of the popular Thanks Coach, Thanks Ref campaign.

Another new initiative for local sporting organisations is \$500,000 to encourage parents to become involved in sports administration. This program will include forums, workshops and training resources to support the continued development of coaches, instructors, officials and

volunteers. Sport and recreation are an essential part of the Australian way of life. I look forward to representing my sporting clubs to ensure that they receive a fair share of these funds in order to develop. Child protection is another issue that is important to all members. I am extremely pleased to see the announcement of 50 new child protection workers. This means that the Beattie Labor government has introduced 250 new front-line child protection workers in three years. This budget has increased spending in the areas of disabilities by 11.6 per cent and families by 12 per cent, the biggest percentage increase in any department. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work done by the minister, Judy Spence, who has been working hard on significant issues in these areas. This massive increase obviously is the result of her dedication and representations in these areas.

This government has focused on families, people with disabilities, the young, the unemployed and the mature. A greater number of retirees will have access to government concessions and business discounts through a fairer Seniors Card means test. Seniors aged 60 to 64 who have a low income Health Care Card issued by the Commonwealth government will be eligible for the benefits of a Seniors Card. They will receive concessions on electricity, registration and transport. This is about giving back to those who have contributed to our communities for decades.

The people of Queensland are tired of having basic services and resources slashed at the hands of a mean-spirited federal government. This state government has continued to pick up the \$20 million shortfall in funding to Queensland's public dental health services dropped by the Howard coalition government—a government that I am sure the people of Queensland will pay back in the same way, that is, drop the Howard coalition government and elect a government that is committed to providing a quality health system, like the Beazley Labor team. Over 16,000 people who have been waiting for public health dental services will be assisted. Funding will be directed to clinics like Logan, where demand is high and waiting lists are long. This will certainly have a direct effect on my constituents in Springwood. I am proud to be a part of a government that is committed to a quality health care system for all Queenslanders.

The Beattie government has invested in the long-term future of this state through record spending in education and programs such as New Basics and 2010. I am confident that investment in knowledge industries will result in long-term employment and economic outcomes for the people of Queensland. This budget is not only about giving the money for the vehicle of the Public Service to operate; this budget is about people. It is about investing in their futures, investing in education and their health services. The people of Queensland voted overwhelmingly to elect the Beattie government for another term. Their confidence has not been misplaced. This budget is responsible and affordable—a budget for all Queenslanders. I congratulate the Treasurer on his first budget and the great work he does as Deputy Premier.

Mr QUINN (Robina—Lib) (9.15 p.m.): This is the fourth Beattie budget. This is the fourth budget with a deficit. It has an underlying deficit of \$887 million, bringing the total deficit over the four budgets to some \$2,680 million. It is the fourth anti-business budget and the fourth anti-jobs budget. To bring a note of reality into this debate, the government needs to look at the ABS figures for unemployment around Australia to see how Queensland fares. If it does that it will get some idea of what is happening in relation to the budget figures and why I have said that this budget is an anti-business and anti-jobs budget.

First of all, Queensland has the highest unemployment rate in Australia of nine per cent. Some 168,000 people are on the unemployment line in Queensland, which is up 10,000 from last month. That is certainly not something that this government can be proud of. More than that, the government needs to compare Queensland to its major competitive states, that is, New South Wales and Victoria. Three years ago when the Beattie government came to office Queensland had an unemployment rate of 8.6 per cent. Our unemployment rate is now nine per cent, an increase of 0.4 per cent. Members should remember that this comes from a government which promised a five per cent unemployment rate. It has almost doubled its target and is going out the back door.

Let us compare this to the other states. What have they done in the same period? Three years ago New South Wales had an unemployment rate of 7.4 per cent. What is it now? It is now 5.8 per cent. It decreased its own unemployment rate by 1.6 per cent. What about Victoria? Three years ago it had an unemployment rate of eight per cent. What is it now? It is now 6.4 per cent. It has also decreased its unemployment rate by 1.6 per cent. What is the gap? The gap is now quite clearly two per cent between Queensland and our major competitor states. The gap between Queensland and the national average is 2.1 per cent, which is the highest gap

Queensland has had for 10 years. That is certainly something this government cannot be proud of. That is why I am saying this budget is an anti-jobs budget, because what the government has been doing for the past four years clearly has not worked, yet it continues to carry on in the same vein. The government has put in place the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle program. Well, it is not! It should face up to reality! All that budgets such as this do is entrench unemployment in this state.

What do we hear from the Premier when unemployment in Queensland is increasing and unemployment in every other state is decreasing? What do we get? We get a range of excuses. I have listed them. I have probably left out a couple, and I have put them in no particular order. The first excuse by the Premier was that there was an Asian economic downturn. And then they rolled off the tongue month by month. Let us go through them. One reason was interstate migration. Too many people were coming across the border. Queensland has always had high rates of migration. Then there was the exchange rate when the Australian dollar wobbled a bit. That was the reason that particular month.

Another reason was interest rates. They went up and down a bit. Then we had petrol prices. They wobbled a bit and were the reason another month. Then we had the GST. Then we had the participation rate, which is the latest one. Another one was the structure of the Queensland economy. The Premier is running out of excuses. As I said before, the next excuse will be the alignment of the planets or some other astrological reason as to why Queensland has a high unemployment rate. The reality is that Queensland's unemployment rate is the highest, and it is locked in for the next 12 months. One has only to look at what other state government budgets around Australia are predicting.

Over the next 12 months New South Wales is predicting an unemployment rate of 6.25 per cent and Victoria is predicting an unemployment rate of 6.5 per cent, while the national average is seven per cent. What is our predicted unemployment rate over this period? It is eight per cent. Curiously enough, this was the only figure not leaked in the run-up to the budget delivered on Tuesday. The fact that there would be 33,000 extra jobs was released. That figure could be found on the front page of the *Courier-Mail*. But the figure that was not released was the unemployment rate prediction for the next 12 months at eight per cent.

Let us go back and look at the 33,000 extra jobs figure. We should compare that with previous budgets for this state. How does the creation of 33,000 jobs for the next three years compare with what was contained in previous budgets? The budget for 1996-97 said that 45,000 jobs would be created in Queensland. The budget for 1997-98 said that there would be an extra 50,000 jobs in Queensland. Incidentally, those two budgets were brought down by the coalition in government. In the budget after that, the figure is reduced from 50,000 to 40,000. In the next budget, the second Beattie budget, the figure is 41,000. In the third Beattie budget the figure is 31,000—a reduction of 10,000 jobs. In this budget the figure is 33,000. We have gone from a high of 50,000 in 1997-98 to the current level of 33,000. That is a reduction of a third. If the government is looking for the reason Queensland has a high unemployment rate, perhaps it should start with some of these figures and not concentrate on Breaking the Unemployment Cycle and all those other programs that it put in place and that clearly are not working.

Let us look at the budget papers to see why there has been a fall-off in jobs. I refer to chart 7.2 on page 78 of Budget Paper No. 2. Incidentally, the member for Moggill made a comment in relation to the last budget about a missing item in the table. During the debate last year he made mention of the fact that all of the figures were there in terms of gross fixed capital expenditure—in other words, the capital program in Queensland. The figure for 1999-2000 was the highest, and the figure for that budget last year was missing. Lo and behold, it has turned up this year. Not only has that budget figure turned up; the figure for this budget has turned up as well. I congratulate Treasury on updating the figures. What we see clearly after 1999-2000 is a dramatic fall-off in the rate of gross fixed capital expenditure in this state. It comes off the peak quite sharply. If members want to know why we are not generating jobs in this state, they should look at this graph.

The graph on the next page shows general government capital expenditure per capita for 2000-01. We can see clearly that Queensland currently has the highest per capita spending in Australia. Well, one would think so, but let us go back and look at last year's figures. That graph shows that Queensland's capital expenditure was \$700 per capita, while the spending in the Northern Territory was about \$650 per capita. This year's graph shows that Queensland's per capita expenditure has fallen from approximately \$700 to just over \$600. But the figure for the Northern Territory is missing. The Northern Territory budget was handed down on 29 May. I will

give Treasury the benefit of the doubt—it may not have had time to put the figure into the table—but I quite suspect that the Northern Territory will be top of the table this year in terms of capital expenditure per capita.

That is one of the reasons jobs are not being generated in this state. Let us look at some of the other reasons. Over a long period of time in this state there has been an anti-business attitude by the government. To see that one has only to look at the economic indicators. As the member for Moggill said earlier today, all the key economic trends are down over the past 12 months—that is, private investment, dwellings, business investment, and machinery and equipment. The actual outcomes as indicated in the budget papers for the last 12 months are worse than the forecast outcomes. It is no wonder we have had a deterioration in our economic conditions, which has led to high unemployment rates. This budget forecasts only a modest increase in the next 12 months. That is the reason the budget forecasts hardly any impact on the unemployment rate in this state.

Why have these leading indicators fallen quite savagely over the past 12 months? To find the answer one only has to go back and look at the way taxes and charges are levied on businesses in this state. Over the past three budgets the take from payroll tax has increased a whopping \$300 million. That is as a result of changes relating to putting superannuation into the calculation. Sure, there has been a small reduction this time around, but the underlying basis increased quite dramatically over the past three budgets. Payroll tax is a direct tax on jobs.

Workers compensation premiums have also increased quite substantially under this government. Again, there was another slight decrease in the rate over the last 12 months or so, but it was not enough to make a substantial difference. These things are factored in by business for the long term. If we are going to alter payroll tax, increase workers compensation and start indicating to coal companies that we are going to re-evaluate the royalty formula—they are next on the hit list; they know that—then we are going to undermine business confidence in this state. That is why confidence is low and the leading indicators are low. Jobs do not grow out of that sort of business environment.

I think the government is on the right track in terms of focusing on information technology and biotechnology. I believe that in order to generate new jobs in the future we have to move in this direction—I have supported the government on this—but jobs will not flow out of the new industries we attract to this state if we have a poor business environment. Businesses will go somewhere else. It does not matter how many incentive programs we have and how many scientists we bring here. Unless we can retain the confidence of business for them to expand and grow in this state, we will not get the growth out of those industries. As I said before, the unemployment rate needs to be addressed. We cannot keep going the same way we are.

Another issue that comes into this equation is the industrial relations legislation. Other members have mentioned how restrictive it is. The workers in the sorts of new industries the government is hoping to attract to this state almost invariably come on a personal contract level. They are high achievers and they are highly mobile. They will go around the world to where these sorts of jobs are. If they have to work in an industrial relations environment that is not conducive to the growth of business, they will take their business elsewhere.

We need to have a highly attractive industrial relations environment, otherwise we will not get these types of high-tech companies coming to this state. Around the world there is increased competition to attract these businesses to certain areas. We are one of many areas in the world trying to attract these types of industries. Unless we can compete on a range of bases—for example, business conditions, including a flexible industrial relations environment—we will not get these businesses here.

The last issue I raise is native title. The mining industry has made it quite plain to me, and I think to everyone who will listen, that we can count it out as a major generator of jobs in the future because of the current restrictive native title legislation. Permits are not being issued and mining companies are reining in the amount of money they are willing to invest in exploration in this state. Until the government fixes that particular issue it cannot look forward to what has been in the past a major jobs generator being a contributor in the future.

All of those things I have mentioned go against job creation in this state. That is why we have such a poor record. The government can put in place as many Breaking the Unemployment Cycle programs as it likes, but until it fixes the fundamentals it is not going to gain in terms of employment in this state. There might be an extra 2,000 or 3,000 jobs forecast to be created over the figure outlined in budgets handed down in previous years, but when we factor in population

growth and a whole range of other issues we see that we are really marking time. That is what the budget says. It forecasts eight per cent unemployment—the same rate as last year. And that is locked in for the next 12 months, so we will continue to have high levels of unemployment. That is why I say this budget is anti-business. That is why I say it is anti-jobs. The fundamental premise underlying all of this is: if we do not have employers, we do not have employees.

As I said, I support the thrust of the government's new initiatives in terms of information technology and biotechnology, but the basic fundamentals are wrong, and until the government fixes that it will not get the jobs growth it needs.

Mr STRONG (Burnett—ALP) (9.30 p.m.): I rise to speak in support of the Beattie government's budget—a budget which is for the benefit of Queensland as a whole. I would like to inform fellow members of the significant difference this budget will achieve for the good of the small but rapidly growing community of Agnes Water. The region of Agnes Water and 1770 has a population of approximately 3,000 residents and a staggering growth rate of around 15 per cent, which is one of the highest growth rates in this state. Strong growth rates, I will admit, are not uncommon, especially in the south-east corner, but I do not think there is a situation like this elsewhere that combines both isolation and growth.

When the Beattie government came to power, the only road access to Agnes and 1770 was, and still is, the Roundhill Road—a 50-kilometre journey through some of the best cattle country in the state but a 50-kilometre journey on one of the busiest—if not, the busiest—gravel roads in the state.

The Miriam Vale Shire Council is doing a marvellous job maintaining its road network considering the task it is up against. Being a coastal road, it suffers from frequent heavy rain events, which take a heavy toll on unsealed roads. As many members of rural electorates would understand, add to that the growing heavy vehicle traffic and you get a very difficult situation for council engineers in keeping the corrugations out of the roadway, which in some respects has hindered the development of the region and also the delivery of government services. The sum of \$470,000 has been provided by this government's budget to seal the last 2.5 kilometres of this journey—to finally close the book on Roundhill Road. This will not only bring relief to the locals who may commute, but it will also boost the local tourist industry, which has been desperately in need of this infrastructure for some time.

Being an isolated community, the Agnes region has, for a long time, struggled with medical service delivery. Whether it be the isolation factor or the population levels of varying demographics, it has been a serious problem for some time. The construction of an ambulance station a few years ago, with the enlistment of an excellent crew of officers with a fully qualified paramedic, has alleviated some of the fears of the local people concerning medical services. Again, the Beattie government has shown it listens to the electorate, understands their concerns and recognises their needs.

I am pleased for the people of Agnes, with the announcement by the Minister for Health that \$600,000 will be used to facilitate the construction of a primary health care centre at Agnes Water—the benefits of which will be hard to calculate. It will offer the community a high standard of medical service that is much needed and well deserved. It will also give a high level of permanency to the medical profession where it is absolutely necessary to carry out their practice and offer their patients the best possible service.

Taking into account the improvements to the quality of the ambulance service and the much-needed investment in the health care centre, another facility which plays an important part in the total health care of the region, the Energex helicopter rescue service, will receive from the Minister for Emergency Services—and to his credit he is in the chamber today—an allocation of \$450,000 per annum. The new helicopter will be bigger, and it can fly faster and travel for longer distances, therefore completing the whole package of health service delivery for my region and beyond.

Provision for the accommodation of the local police officer at Agnes, plus funding for the construction of a new police station, which will encompass provision for an extra officer, will be welcomed with open arms. The officers who are there now do a fine job considering the conditions they work with—for example, the trebling of the town's population during peak holiday periods, high unemployment in this large rural area, and a long drive to the nearest watch-house. The provision of the new police station and an extra police officer will be a major benefit for the community.

The announcement that there will be an investment of infrastructure in the local school in the form of a small amenities block of \$105,000 is, to say the least, the icing on the cake for residents of Agnes Water and surrounding districts, who have experienced hardships over the last 10 years.

The best news for my electorate is the level of capital works being invested not only in Agnes, which desperately needs it, but also in the Coral Coast. In this budget, \$100,000 out of a future \$1.5 million has been allocated for the construction of a combined ambulance and fire and rescue headquarters west of Bargara—again provided by my colleague the Minister for Emergency Services. The continued growth in the areas of Burnett Heads, Coral Cove and Innes Park has brought both services to the realisation that current service capacities will not adequately cater for the future.

I was fortunate to represent the Minister for Emergency Services at the launching of the trial for a new ambulance station at a new location with enhanced personnel. The trial immediately showed great success with quicker response times and better service. The trial has a little way to go, but this investment will bring greater service to the Coral Coast in both fire and rescue and ambulance services. It will also provide an extra six or seven full-time jobs.

The construction of a TAFE marine centre at the new port precinct at a cost of three-quarters of a million dollars is great news for the Burnett Heads area, providing a much-needed boost to the local construction industry, which is struggling under the burden of the GST. As well as the construction work, it will provide a much-needed flow-on effect to local accommodation providers, hotels and eateries, shopkeepers and other service businesses.

Other construction work given the go-ahead includes a two-space relocatable building for the Woongarra State School at a cost of \$168,000 and a public housing capital works program in the Burnett electorate at a cost of \$287,000—provided by the Minister for Public Works, who is also in the chamber. These projects will provide continuity of work for Q-Build tradesmen and especially young apprentices. It is the apprentices of today who will keep the building industry going tomorrow. The flow-on effects to local suppliers from these projects are also badly needed to help bring the building industry out of the doldrums.

The Isis district will also benefit greatly from the budget, with the Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads having announced an allocation of \$1 million to help the Isis council widen the Isis Highway at Logging Creek, as well as upgrading Farnsfield Road. These works programs for the Isis will provide extra paid work for the council and maintain a level of continuity for its permanent staff. It relieves some of the burden from the council to fund these projects now, rather than falling behind.

In summary, I am pleased to see the Beattie government's budget doing the things it has to do—and doing them well—with good increases for the important areas, while keeping our state of Queensland in great shape and setting it up well for the future.

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (9.38 p.m.): This first Labor government budget for the 50th Parliament has elicited both support and criticism, which is the usual mix for a government budget. I want to congratulate the government on a number of issues and raise my concerns about several others as they relate to my electorate.

In the run-up to the last election, the Labor candidate, the Premier and some ministers visited my electorate armed with a basket overflowing with promises of good things to come. At the time and since, I have reinforced to government that a promise made should be a promise kept. To the Premier's credit, a number of these promises have been clearly funded in this budget, others have been more difficult to identify, and some have been broken.

On a population basis, my electorate would have to rank among the highest in relation to participation in sporting activities. Whether it is the fact that many families are involved in shiftwork or that it is just a keen sporting area, participation rates are excellent.

Development of appropriate sporting areas is a constant challenge to local and state governments. I acknowledge the government's contribution to the PCYC multipurpose sport and recreation centre. On 31 January this year, the Premier promised the additional funding to take the state government's contribution to \$2.4 million, which will see the commencement of these alterations. The budget listed \$1.2 million for the centre, which I have assumed is the second half of the promised funding. There are many groups which will benefit from this expansion and I thank the government for it.

Upon inquiry, I am advised that funding for the Gladstone City Library is contained in the Regional Centres Program administered by the Minister for Local Government and Planning. I

have been unable to identify a line item and will seek the minister's confirmation. While some would say commercial accessibility to print and audio material to families now reduces the need for libraries, I would have to disagree with this point of view and say that many families struggle to meet day-to-day necessities. Access to a well-stocked, IT-progressive library is essential to both children and adults, and I thank the minister for her commitment to the community through this funding.

In the run-up to the last election an announcement was made of the funding for the Gladstone museum and art gallery, and I am again advised that this funding is contained in the Millennium Arts Funding Program. We have an excellent, if small, museum and gallery headed by Pamela Whitlock. Pam does a wonderful job, ably assisted by her staff and a group of volunteers who work tirelessly for our community. On their behalf I thank Minister Foley, who again visited the gallery in the run-up to the last election and announced this funding, for his support for our community shown by these visits.

Emergency services remains a great concern to me. While the men and women of services such as the Queensland Fire Service, the Queensland Ambulance Service, the State Emergency Service and rural fire brigades work quietly from day to day, their invaluable contribution to our community becomes evident only when an emergency occurs. To them I say thank you. I again draw to the minister's attention the fact that while ever this government allows firefighters to turn out one and two for financial reasons, there will remain a huge risk that our men and women in the firefighting services will be injured or worse in the line of duty. I call on the minister to return to a one and three turnout as an absolute safe minimum limit.

The new ambulance station at Mount Larcom has been promised for many years. The community is quite sceptical that it will ever arrive. The fact that the funds have been allocated in this budget will go a great way to encouraging not only the community but also the ambulance officers who turn out to both rural and major highway incidents. We have had a run of very serious incidents on the Bruce Highway, which has placed a great strain on emergency services personnel. This new facility, while not affecting the actual incidents, will ensure that officers who are required to turn out do so from a state-of-the-art facility.

A new ambulance station at Boyne Island is now critical. This community is a fast growing, buoyant community looking clearly at further exponential growth. The current station is similar to a converted double garage under the ambulance residence and is quite inappropriate for the Boyne-Tannum community, who reside 20 to 30 minutes from the Gladstone Hospital.

In its election material, the Labor Party in Gladstone stated that Peter Beattie is putting the community first, with \$10 million in funding for policing: an extra 35 police, a police headquarters for Gladstone—which was commenced when the coalition was in government—and a police station for Calliope. The Calliope station was done when Minister Tom Barton held the Police portfolio, and I have thanked him for that building, which I know is appreciated by all in the Calliope area.

I take this opportunity to put on the record the appreciation of our Calliope residents to Senior Sergeant Darryl Saw, who will be retiring this year from the Police Service. Darryl has worked in the Calliope area for in excess of 20 years and is held in the highest regard by the vast majority of people. Thanks to Darryl and his wife Judy—an important member of any country policing team is the officer's wife—for their dedication to our area. Happy mango growing!

The Labor promise of 35 additional police officers for Gladstone is very close to the real need for the area. The Gladstone Police Station currently has a staff allocation of 41 officers. There are now several extra officers as we have received a couple of groups of trainees. For those, we thank the Police Minister. Our region, however, is looking in the very near future to industrial development, which will bring, with just one of the major projects, a peak construction work force of between 5,000 and 6,000 workers. On top of that, there will be partners and families. Police, hospital, ambulance and fire services—those essential emergency and safety services—cannot afford to catch up retrospectively. The personnel must be in place before the community expands in order to manage the influx of people. I support the election promise of 35 additional officers as contained in the Labor election material and look forward to the minister's provision of those officers.

A promise was also made in the last election for a \$1.5 million police station for Tannum Sands. This is a growth area for our region, and the options which were opened up with this promise were important. Decisions could be made to relocate to a more central location, if that was seen as necessary, or to remain in the current location. That promise has not been

honoured, to the extent that the allocation has been reduced to \$600,000 over two budgets. While we are appreciative that the needs of Boyne-Tannum have been recognised, the reduction in options for these improvements is disappointing.

Every government, every elected member recognises the value of a sound and effective educational system. Our state school network provides a critical educational stream, and I thank all those principals, teachers, teacher aides, administration, cleaning and gardening staff—indeed, all staff—who ensure that schools work to provide a good education for our young people. I also thank the private schools in my electorate for their dedication to quality education.

I pass on the appreciation of all residents and those at Gladstone State High for the Cooler Schools and school renewals funding in this budget. While I have not had the opportunity to confirm that the allocation is at the level expected, work done will certainly enhance the learning environment for the students. Gladstone State High School is an original school in the city and worked through the large population influx in the early 60s. The school planning reflects this emergent response to a significant increase in school pupils which occurred. The planning for the state high school is well overdue. I commend the students who have been involved in the Gladstone region Sustainable Schools Program. These students presented an overview of their work to Ministers Bligh, Welford and Wells last sitting. They have worked hard to develop an authoritative, articulate proposal.

Tannum State High is a state-of-the-art school for this new millennium. Principal Ray Johnson has developed a school community which is held in the highest regard by parents and visitors alike. Congratulations to him. The new student buildings, the next stage in the development of the school, will be welcome additions, and we thank the Minister for Education for her work for this community.

The Teachers Union has expressed its disappointment in the allocation of additional resources to the state's schools program. I am sure they are better placed to advocate in the global sense. I do know that promises were made on 31 January this year to increase the number of teachers in the Gladstone electorate over the next three years by as many as 18, subject to consultation with local stakeholders, in addition to those needed for enrolment growth. I look forward to working with the local Teachers Union representatives to achieve this goal.

Comment has been made in the media that a significant reduction has been made in the area of TAFE funding. While there has not been time to confirm this information as true or otherwise, I am certain I would not be alone in expressing concern should any funding reduction be contemplated for the TAFE system. In my electorate a number of schools have established a very effective partnership with TAFE, enabling students to commence TAFE modules while in high school to enhance their employability at the conclusion of year 12. For those considering a trade, the modules effectively make them productive apprentices from the point in time when an employer takes them on for industry employment. Similarly, a partnership has been developed with Rosella Park school to enable their senior students to access training at TAFE. This training has not only enhanced their skills in areas such as hospitality but has also significantly improved their self-esteem. I commend all those in the schools and at TAFE who have been involved in the positive development of these programs.

Our region has been recognised as an industrial development area for the state. We have a high percentage of primary processing industries, and while they provide much-needed and appreciated employment, I look forward to further downstream value-adding industries coming to the area. Mention is made in the budget of the light metals fabrication industries, and this diversification will not only bring non-smokestack industries to the area but will also introduce a new employment stream for the wide range of local people currently looking for work.

In recognising the growth in the region, I wrote to the government asking for work to be done to predict the needed resources to accommodate projected growth. In February, the Premier announced the growth management study to assess the impact of growth and ways of managing it. It is disappointing that this study is not well under way as we risk not being ready for the growth impacts unless tangible work commences on this study. After inquiring about the budget handed down on Tuesday, I am advised that the funding for this is in the budget for the Department of State Development, and I thank the minister for that.

Work is also scheduled for the Yarwun industrial estate and the Aldoga state development area, both of which have major industries notionally allocated. The Aldoga smelter was announced, again in the midst of the election campaign. However, proponents have since visited the electorate to outline their progress to date. Two industries, TATA Steel, whose project has

been facilitated by the state government, and Astral Calcining Corporation, are also progressing with their project studies.

Allied with the individual projects, continued development must occur at the Gladstone port, the Awoonga Dam, to the road network and to the electricity grid and the like to ensure that support infrastructure and resources are available in a timely manner. Some time ago it was announced that funding would be made available for a scientific auditor to be engaged to review the progress of the SPP/CPM project. This is mentioned in the budget. However, the company and the local liaison group, the Yarwun Targinnie Residents Group, are currently working with an independent facilitator. I look forward to clarification as to whether these are two separate processes or one. Certainly, community concerns in that region remain undiminished and unresolved.

Access to free public health remains for many families the only affordable option to them. The Gladstone hospital must expand to cope with the expected growth. Currently staff and resources have been constrained to the point at which wards are closed on the weekends. I have had numerous complaints from adult patients that they have been moved to the paediatric ward over the weekend. They and I remain of the view that that is completely unacceptable on several levels, and we call on the minister for her intervention.

Funding has been allocated for the upgrading of the old nurses accommodation—a piece of Gladstone's history—for which we are most appreciative. It is challenging at best to attract medical specialists and staff to rural and regional Queensland. In the absence of appropriate accommodation, that challenge is almost insurmountable. People in my electorate are seeking a quality medical service that reflects not only the demography of the area but also the high risk mix of industry that is there. Staff currently working at the hospital—doctors, nursing staff and administrative staff—do a magnificent job with the resources that they have. They need additional staff, and I thank the minister for the work done up to this time to improve medical services and look forward to working further with her to ensure a greater enhancement of staff numbers. It is also essential that further specialist services be attracted to our area.

Our public dental service is like so many—stretched to its limits and beyond. The Labor candidate at the last election promised three extra dentists for the community dental clinic. We struggle to keep the allocation that we have currently, with people waiting up to two years for dentures and people waiting for two years and more for general maintenance work on their teeth. Before some can get their six-monthly check-up—which, in reality, is their two or three-yearly check-up—their teeth deteriorate to the point at which they must call for emergency dental work. I understand the challenge that the minister is facing in recruiting dentists for this demanding area of oral health, which again is more challenging in rural and regional Queensland. However, in many instances families just cannot afford private dental treatment and look to Queensland Health for a reliable and responsive service.

Recently I had contact with the Minister for Environment to discuss the current situation in relation to the EPA in Gladstone. Given our industry profile, this agency plays an important role in monitoring both the local environmental conditions and industrial compliance to ensure safe living standards. I thank the minister for his response.

Time will preclude me from dealing with all the issues covered by the budget. Other speakers have commented on issues such as housing. I would add to their comments that Minister Swarten has always been supportive of the great many in the community who require assistance with their accommodation needs. These people include low-income families, families with parents or children with disabilities, the elderly and other special needs groups. Recently Minister Swarten was in the electorate opening an extension to our aged-care facilities. I know that at that time the need for a boarding house facility was discussed. At that time he made the comment that those facilities are needed in so many districts across Queensland. But I reiterate the need for that accommodation in the electorate. I look forward to working with him to improve housing options for residents in my electorate.

Similarly, disability services are a discrete but essential service in this state. In central Queensland, we desperately need a medium-term respite centre for families with children who have severe or profound disabilities. The carers need more than a few days' break; several months are required to ensure that families can rebuild from the stress that is created when they are caring for a high-needs family member. Additionally, there is an increasing need for aged-care facilities. A recent federal government allocation of 40 beds to Bindaree Lodge has alleviated in some measure the critical pressure families have faced in placing in care aged parents or parents

experiencing various levels of dementia or Alzheimer's disease. Owing to our ageing population, these needs will not diminish. Our methods of addressing that growing need must improve.

With a mix of urban, industrial and rural industries, the various pressures faced by rural Queensland affects the areas in the electorate where primary production is the sole income stream. Proper resourcing of both the Primary Industries Department and the Police Service in relation to the Stock Squad is essential. This is not the current situation. I call on the Primary Industries Minister to respond positively to calls by the rural sector for additional support.

As I stated at the commencement of my speech, this budget will be supported by some and criticised by others. I thank the Premier and his ministers in charge of those portfolios where the demonstrated needs in my electorate have been addressed. I believe that the people in my electorate are very fair in their demands and their expectations and will do all that I can to bring to the government's attention those matters that they raise from time to time. I look forward to working with the ministers of this government for the betterment of my electorate.

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN (Pumicestone—ALP) (9.56 p.m.): I am delighted to rise to add my full support to the Beattie government's first budget in its second term. I applaud the Treasurer, the Honourable Terry Mackenroth, and his diligent staff for bringing down what can only be described as a fair and reasonable deal across a broad spectrum of groups within the community throughout Queensland.

This is a first for me, and I am proud to say that I had a small influence on at least one of the outcomes. Prior to the 17 February state election, I made a promise and, with the help of a number of people who helped me lobby, I was able to secure funding for that promise. That is good news for the residents of Pumicestone. It shows that they have put their faith in a government of its word. Premier Peter Beattie's government promised and it delivered. As the Treasurer stated, no new taxes; not one promise broken.

The announcement of the funding for a Morayfield police shopfront in this year's budget was well received by the residents of Caboolture south and Morayfield. People who have lobbied hard and sent letters of support for the proposal should be commended for their efforts. The local councillor, Lynette Devereaux, and the Morayfield Shopping Centre Manager, Sharon White, also put their weight behind the push for more police in an effort to ease the growing concerns of both residents and shoppers about the crime rate, particularly car theft. I congratulate Minister Tony McGrady and his hardworking staff on taking the necessary measures to ensure that the safety and security of residents remains a primary focus for this government.

As a retired but still registered primary schoolteacher and the mother of two high-school aged children, I take great interest in education at all levels. I recognise its importance and I am proud to say that the government has delivered a record \$4.3 billion Education Budget, which accounts for just less than one quarter of all government spending. The Minister for Education, the Honourable Anna Bligh, and her outstanding staff ought to be congratulated on the equitable way in which the funding has been allocated throughout this state.

Ms Keech: Hear, hear! I agree with that.

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN: I take the member's interjection and thank her. This Education budget is positive. It delivers a profound increase of 8.9 per cent in the state government's funding for the Education portfolio and a 9.1 per cent increase in state funding to Queensland's schools. At least 135 additional teachers will be employed in 2001-02 as part of the Beattie government's commitment to employ an additional 800 teachers over four years and there will be \$50 million for a much-welcomed Triple R maintenance program over three years. A sum of \$220m is provided for teachers' salaries across the state.

On a local level, in Pumicestone funds have been approved for \$279,366 in total education capital spending, including \$53,460 for Caboolture High School's phase 3 renewal program, \$80,277 for the construction of a special education unit with a covered link at the Caboolture High School, a \$17,500 contribution towards the provision of a bus set-down area at the high school, \$145,629 for a relocatable building for Minimbah State School and \$200,000 growth funding for 60 additional student places at Caboolture TAFE.

The Beattie government has delivered on its promises in health. There are significant increases in funding and resources, with a total of \$382 million for hospitals and other health facilities, including \$10 million for upgrading state nursing homes. I congratulate the minister, the Honourable Wendy Edmond, and her dedicated staff not only for putting priorities on the expected health areas but also for making funds available for some new initiatives as well.

The reduction of waiting lists is always a difficult task, but the Beattie government has tackled it head on by providing an extra \$15 million for elective surgery and an extra \$5 million for oral health. This funding will help people who have been waiting for a lengthy time for public health dental services and I will ensure that the Caboolture Dental Clinic gets its fair share as it is a high demand area.

Ms Keech: I know you will, because you are such a good member.

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN: I thank the honourable member for her compliment. Queensland's public dental health service is now the largest in Australia with 194 mobile clinics and 255 fixed clinics in operation.

A key initiative is providing \$5.6 million to place 100 nurses in secondary schools across the state. A sum of \$5.37 million has been allocated to community organisations over two years to help tackle alcohol and illicit drug abuse.

On the local scene, the Caboolture Hospital received \$650,000 for an intensive care unit and a boost of \$3.3 million per year for critical care services. Home Assist in Pumicestone is to receive a further \$128,000 and \$58,000 will be made available to assist not-for-profit community organisations to provide crisis accommodation for people who are homeless, in crisis and in need of transitional support.

One of the biggest success stories of the Beattie Labor government is the Community Renewal Program being funded and implemented across the state. I am fortunate to have in my electorate the program in the Caboolture South-Morayfield area. Locals have embraced the concept, which has instilled pride in the area, and they are working towards building a better and safer community. The notional allocation for the Caboolture South-Morayfield project over the next three years is \$2.7 million. Expended funds to date amount to \$696,441 and approved funds are \$900,000. Projects under way include footpaths, tree scapes, lighting, public meeting rooms and improvements to parks. These works were identified by the residents as areas of need and I congratulate the Minister for Housing, the Honourable Robert Schwarten, and his loyal staff on their help in improving the area's facilities and the quality of life of the local residents.

The Department of Housing has allocated \$600,000 for a continuing public housing Capital Works Program in Pumicestone, and there has been a significant rise from \$74.3 million to \$90.1 million in public housing maintenance across the state. My senior electorate officer, Ralda Reid, and myself, along with Department of Housing staffers Phil Frethey and Diana Roper, toured areas of affordable housing recently to engage the extent of maintenance needed. The residents we spoke to were genuinely happy with their accommodation, just wanting minor works carried out. I am pleased that the Department of Housing has put in place a number of job opportunities that involve 190 apprentices under the Housing Industry Trade Training Scheme, HITT, providing the skills that those young people need to gain future full-time employment.

Not enough is said about the interstate migration of people from other states to Queensland and its effects on job figures. The member for Robina scoffed at the suggestion that the migration affects job figures, but if he would familiarise himself with the statistics, he would see that they show 19,012 southerners alone came to live in Queensland during the 1999-2000 period, which is a dramatic increase of 10 per cent over the previous year. In my electorate, I am told that just under 1,000 new residents have moved into the area this year, and other areas have had similar increases. Despite this, the Beattie Labor government is creating real jobs and real opportunities for Queenslanders.

I congratulate the Premier and his efficient staff on maintaining their emphasis on job creation and training. A sum of \$100 million has been allocated to the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative to help create 13,200 jobs and \$726.4 million will be invested in vocational training and education, including \$538.8 million for TAFE Queensland. This reflects the government's objective to create a highly skilled and adaptable work force to meet the needs of our state as a Smart State.

Unlike the federal government with its GST and BAS debacle, this state government has not deserted small business; in fact, quite the opposite. This is evident in the fact that 18 State Development officers have been funded to help small business. We are very fortunate to have one in Caboolture which all Pumicestone businesses can access. In fact, I am currently working with the director, Kim Steer, on more ways in which businesses on Bribie Island and surrounds can have even greater access to what State Development has to offer.

A sum of \$17 million has been allocated over the next four years for initiatives designed to develop business. This is supported by funding for business advisers, development officers,

workshops and seminars. Those measures will enhance management skills, and should help in more efficient productivity leading, in the long-term, to more employment.

On the environment, an expanded maintenance program of \$40 million over four years has been allocated to enhance national parks, and will include improved access and the employment of 140 trainee rangers. We are fortunate to have access to 10 of those in Pumicestone and they have been learning a variety of skills from hands-on experience. The budget will also provide the necessary funding for equipment and supplies to help them maintain the parks. The recently passed South East Queensland Forestry Agreement was a landmark in native forest management and will go a long way to protect those environmentally sensitive, biodiverse areas. A sum of \$6.1 million has been allocated to secure some of those and some coastal lands.

The government will continue the Better Parks initiative with a further commitment to \$2.8 million, and I would like to congratulate the Minister for Environment, the Honourable Dean Wells, and his helpful staff for continuing to promote the importance of the environment and the productive consultation process throughout the wider community to develop a Queensland parks system master plan. That is a demonstration of this government's commitment to enhancing the state's protected areas. Now, protected lands, including national parks, occupy four per cent of Queensland, which is a three per cent increase since 1990.

The Seniors Card was a Goss Labor government initiative, and I thank the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care, the Honourable Judy Spence, and her conscientious staff for allowing a greater number of our retirees access to a number of government concessions and business discounts through a fairer Seniors Card means test. The government has expanded the Seniors Card test to recognise 60 to 64 year olds who have a low income health care card. This move will see a further 1,430 seniors now become eligible for the benefits that a lot of other Queenslanders enjoy. This government is simply giving a little bit back to those who have given a lot.

One of the key elements of my first speech in this House highlighted the plight of foster carers. I am pleased to announce that \$8.4 million in additional funding will go to this worthy group. I trust that it will be enough to make a difference to their lives and those who are entrusted in their care. Time does not permit me to cover all aspects of this budget, but I hope that it makes a worthwhile difference to many, many Queenslanders.

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (10.09 p.m.): In rising to speak in this year's budget debate, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the government's ongoing financial commitment to improving the level of services available to residents in my electorate and also to remind the government of various continuing needs for improved services that apparently have not yet been addressed by the government. Nambour, the largest populated centre in my electorate, will continue to receive a significant injection of new government money over the next 12 months as a result of the continuation of the Nambour regional hospital's upgrade and expansion.

While the Nambour Dental Clinic underwent a major refurbishment during the term of the last government, I use this opportunity to remind the government that, with the injection of some new money and additional staff, the clinic would be able to significantly increase the number of clients able to receive dental treatment and, accordingly, result in a major reduction in the time people have to wait for dental treatment. Construction of Nambour's new ambulance station in Rigby Street is due to start in the near future and is scheduled to be completed by September this year.

While I acknowledge that the refurbishment and expansion of the Nambour Police Station has not been identified by the Queensland Police Service as a priority, I look forward to taking the new Police Minister, the Honourable Tony McGrady, on a tour of the station early next month so he can see first-hand the reasons for my calls for an upgrade of the station. Whilst the Minister for Police is in Nambour, I will also be inviting him to meet with some Nambour businesspeople so he can hear first-hand the great community support for the Police Beat initiative started last year. An increased police presence in the Bli Bli community and the Mapleton-Montville range community also has a great need.

I thank the government for continuing the allocation of new money for the further upgrading of the Nambour TAFE campus. The provision of over \$3.572 million for the expansion of the hospitality, information technology and general studies facilities at the Mooloolaba campus next door will also have a direct benefit on many of my constituents. The bus-rail service started during the last government is continuing to be very popular with residents of the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast.

I thank the government for allocating \$150,000 for roadworks on the Palmwoods-Mooloolah Road between the railway line bridge and Old Gympie Road. The continuation of the upgrade of the Nambour to Mapleton Road is great news for the community. I especially acknowledge the government's willingness to inject a further \$3 million into that section of the road between the Nambour Hospital and Hennebury Road. The Yandina-Coolum Road will also benefit with an upgrade at a cost of almost \$2.9 million. The injection of a further \$450,000 to continue the upgrade and the installation of new traffic management devices is great news for the region.

Only last week whilst attending a local neighbourhood watch meeting I heard how the police accessed the Department of Transport video recording records of the Howard and Currie Street intersection in Nambour for the purpose of clarifying the circumstances surrounding a traffic accident that occurred at that location. The surveillance cameras installed during the term of the last government in the Nambour Railway Station precinct have been very successful in deterring motor vehicle break-ins and illegal activity in the railway station precinct.

Roadworks on the Eumundi-Kenilworth Road are continuing. I understand that the workers are already well ahead of their work schedule due not only to the great weather we have had recently but also their great work attitude.

While speaking on the issue of roadworks, I will use this opportunity to put on the public record the need for a proper traffic management plan to resolve the traffic problems currently existing at the McKenzie Road and Nambour Connection Road intersection. Other roadworks priorities not funded to date in my electorate include further works on the Kenilworth to Conondale road, works on the Palmwoods to Montville road, works on the Obi Obi road and the Nambour to Bli Bli road. A pull-off lane on the Nambour to Mapleton Road section close to Mapleton is also a high priority.

Whilst I am informed that the bridge at Bli Bli over the Maroochy River is structurally sound, I believe it needs to be identified by the department as a project for the future. I also use this opportunity to thank the Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads, the Honourable Steve Bredhauer, for his support of the Kenilworth school community in allowing the continuation of the Kenilworth to Conondale school bus service.

The School Nurse Program, started during the last government at the Nambour and Burnside State High Schools, is very successful and I hope that this new service will be expanded to other schools in my electorate. Many schools now have access to a school chaplain, and I understand this program is very successful for the students identified in the at-risk category. I hope this government will acknowledge the significant benefits of this service and find some way to assist the minister's fraternity in funding this service.

I understand that almost \$12 million will be made available through the repainting, re-roofing and water reticulation program for schools in Queensland. I accordingly ask the government to seriously consider the needs of the Yandina State School, the Burnside State School, the Nambour State High School and the Nambour State School when the money is allocated out of this program. Last year the Nambour State High School received \$124,000 for the planning stage of the school's renewal program. I am very pleased to see a further \$912,000 has been allocated in this year's budget for the next stage of the redevelopment of the school.

Whilst I do not wish to be unreasonable, I do place on the public record the frustration that some members of the Nambour State High School's renewal committee are experiencing because of the delays in moving this project forward. I understand the minister's department is now investigating my concerns, and I thank her for following this up.

I thank the Minister for Education, the Honourable Anna Bligh, for her prompt response to my calls for increasing the height of the North Arm State School boundary fence. I understand that construction on this fence is scheduled to start in the near future. The Palmwoods State School also stands to benefit, with an improved bus set-down area, as a result of the government allocating \$50,000 towards this project. However, this funding is conditional upon the Maroochy Shire Council also contributing \$50,000. I hope that, in its budget due to be brought down next month, the Maroochy Shire Council does the right thing for the Palmwoods State School community. I also hope that the Maroochy Shire Council decides to allocate \$100,000 in its budget next month for reconstruction roadworks on the Obi Obi road. If the council does allocate these funds, the Obi Obi community will also see the state government contributing \$100,000 to the roadworks project.

After delays caused by continual wet weather, the Nambour Special School community has finally started using the new school classroom facilities. I thank the government for responding to

the school community's special needs and I look forward to taking the Minister for Education on an inspection of the new building when she next visits Nambour. I know that, whilst she is in Nambour, the parents and supporters of the children's therapy centre next door to the special school hope to be able to meet with her and to show her their centre and the types of programs available to children with disabilities.

Whilst speaking on the needs of people with disabilities, I am pleased that the government has allocated \$4.8 million to assist the Endeavour Foundation to run the services they provide in Queensland. I have had a number of meetings with Endeavour Foundation chief executive officer, Mr Gerard Menses. I understand that he is pleased with the government's assistance and has assured me that, while the facilities will not be able to be expanded on the Sunshine Coast, he certainly will not be stopping or closing down any of the current services. I know that this announcement will bring a great sigh of relief to many Sunshine Coast residents. Nevertheless, I believe there is still a long way to go in responding to the great needs of this area.

I thank the Minister for Families and Minister for Disability Services, the Honourable Judy Spence, for finding the necessary money to purchase a dwelling in Nambour for the operation of a soon to be started Sunshine Coast family network respite centre. I also use this opportunity to remind the government of the lack of crisis accommodation on the Sunshine Coast for people and families in crisis. Unfortunately, domestic violence is far too prevalent in our region and brings with it calls for a significant increase in government assistance.

Unfortunately, the redevelopment of the Nambour Police Citizens Youth Club has not received the necessary funding in this year's budget, notwithstanding that the government's own feasibility studies supported the redevelopment and recommended that it proceed. I shall continue to lobby the government on the benefits that will flow to the whole Sunshine Coast region if this project is to proceed.

I am very pleased to hear that the government has allocated \$1.3 million for the construction of a new courthouse complex at Caloundra. I know that when this new courthouse complex is operational it will take a lot of pressure off the Maroochydore Court House and will have a direct benefit on speeding up the hearing of matters in the court system. The Public Trust Office, opened in Nambour earlier this year by the Attorney-General, the Honourable Rod Welford, is working well, and I thank the government for its vote of confidence in Nambour.

I am very pleased to hear that the government will employ an additional 12 safety inspectors skilled in the electrical field for the purpose of attempting to reduce the number of deaths in Queensland caused by electrocution. As the Sunshine Coast is a rapidly growing region with a lot of building work always occurring, I accordingly call on the government to acknowledge the benefits of having some of these new safety officers located in the region. Over the next few months the Yandina community will witness significant housing construction taking place. I thank the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing, Robert Schwarten, for responding to calls from many of the elderly in our community who wanted to retire in Yandina but who were unable to find suitable accommodation. I have no doubt that the Yandina community will be very proud of the units once they have been completed.

In relation to the Better Parks program announced in the budget, I will be lobbying the government for some of the money allocated to this program to be spent in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast. The opportunities to have new infrastructure projects built in our parks whilst at the same time providing traineeships for the young unemployed is good news for everyone. I understand that 15 of the new park rangers who are due to start permanent work on the Sunshine Coast in the near future were previously workers who were retrenched from the Cooroy Boral sawmill. Whilst it is good to see that the government has found new permanent jobs for some of these retrenched sawmill workers, I believe there is still a long way to go.

The Great Walks of Queensland project also identified in the budget will provide a great opportunity for many interest groups on the Sunshine Coast hinterland to genuinely network for the good and the prosperity of the whole region. For too long the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast has been taken for granted, and I hope that as a result of the Great Walks of Queensland initiative and the Better Parks program our community will be able to move forward and better promote what we have for too long taken for granted. In speaking to the appropriation bills, I have limited my comments to a local focus. Notwithstanding this, I commend the Treasurer for his budget and thank the Premier and his ministers for listening to the concerns of my constituents.

Ms KEECH (Albert—ALP) (10.21 p.m.): The strength of the Beattie budget is that it is based on an Australian traditional value, a value that says that when you give your word to someone

you keep it. In the age of Game Boys, laptops and chat rooms, for some people keeping one's promise may have gone the way of body shirts, brylcreem and lava lamps. But I am proud that the Beattie Labor government gave its word to the people of Queensland on 17 February this year. The budget recognises the importance of such a traditional value by delivering on all its election promises and by doing so without raising a single additional tax.

This budget focuses on the priorities which are important to the people of Queensland. How did the government discover these priorities? Simply by doing what this Labor government does best: getting out in the community and listening to the people of Queensland through its community cabinets and through the hard work of its Labor members in this House. On work and real jobs, on health and improved hospitals, on education and better schooling for all young people in Queensland and on safe and secure communities, the 2001 budget has delivered. I am proud to be part of a government which, unlike the opposition, is clearly focused on a vision—a vision which sees Queensland as the Smart State in the knowledge nation, a vision which can only be achieved through strong and effective leadership, a well-managed economy and a stable government clearly focused on getting Queenslanders into jobs despite the harsh macro-economic times.

This budget delivers on work and jobs. The bills before the House renew the Beattie government's commitment to job creation and training opportunities. Tonight we have heard the whining from the National Party, as we would, regarding the Beattie government's five per cent target for jobs growth. However, I say that it is better to be focused on a target than to have no target at all. As the mother of two teenagers and a son who turned 21 just a couple of days ago—

Ms Male interjected.

Ms KEECH: Yes, I am very proud of him. I have taught my children that if they are to succeed in life they must have a goal. So, too, must the Beattie Labor government. It had a goal, and that goal was to achieve a five per cent unemployment level. Imagine what would have happened if it had no goal at all. Perhaps now we would be looking at a 10 per cent, 11 per cent or 12 per cent unemployment rate. I applaud the Beattie government for being focused on its goal and for working hard towards achieving it.

If the future of Queensland is so black, as the National Party likes to paint it, why are so many migrants from the southern states flocking to Queensland?

Mr English: Let the Nationals leave.

Ms KEECH: Absolutely. The reason? I quote from the *Financial Review* of 15 June 2001. It states—

It's more than sun-filled days, tropical fruit and sandy beaches luring people to Queensland.

It sounds as if it is talking about the Gold Coast, doesn't it?

Mrs Carryn Sullivan: A Labor government.

Ms KEECH: Absolutely. It continues—

It's an underlying attraction of more service-oriented employment and job options.

Here we have the unbiased opinion of the *Financial Review*. What more support could one want for the Beattie Labor government's policies? In fact, in 1999-2000 there was a net interstate increase to Queensland of 19,012 people, up 10 per cent from the previous year. Obviously there are a lot of people in Australia who like Queensland. They find that it is an attractive place to come to, and they would not be coming here if jobs were not available.

Like the member for Mansfield, I am also a great fan of the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle program. I am happy to see that \$100 million has been allocated to create more than 13,200 jobs across Queensland. I am particularly happy that mature-age job seekers, including those in the electorate of Albert, will receive additional support through the Experience Pays program. This program provides cash incentives of up to \$4,000 to private and/or public sector employers for employing a long-term unemployed person aged 45 years or over for a 12-month period. I can assure the House that each week many people in this age group seek my assistance in trying to find a job. In addition, the Community Jobs Plan has been allocated \$21.4 million to help nearly 4,150 long-term unemployed people into jobs or training opportunities. The CJP has been instrumental in gaining jobs for local people in my electorate, particularly through the Eagleby community renewal program.

This budget delivers on health. Our free public hospital system is Queensland Labor's oldest and proudest tradition, and I welcome the budget's focus on funding Queensland's public hospitals and improvements to community health facilities. My office receives many phone calls from elderly residents who are waiting for operations. I therefore welcome the \$20 million over two years to reduce the elective surgery waiting list. It is a fact that poor dental health is bad for the whole body. Struggling families in Albert find it very difficult to find that extra money to go to the dentist, and public dental services often have long waiting periods. I welcome the extra \$5 million which will be used to reduce waiting lists for public oral health services in areas of high demand. I can assure the minister that the electorate of Albert is one of those.

This budget delivers on education. As a registered teacher who has taught students from kindergarten to postgraduate university level in Australia, Asia and the Pacific, seeing education treated so favourably in this budget pleases me. I congratulate the Minister for Education on her hard work in reminding the Treasurer of how important education is.

Mr Schwarten: She didn't need reminding.

Ms KEECH: I know how important education is in making a difference in a person's life. As we move into the 21st century, Queensland parents, like me, know that giving their children a good education is an investment in their future. Peter Beattie's government knows this, too. That is why a record \$4.7 billion, nearly a 12 per cent increase on last year, has been allocated to education in this budget, and this will also put an additional 135 teachers into classrooms. As an educator, I am happy to announce that in the electorate of Albert this budget has been very kind to schools. I am particularly proud that this government's budget has delivered on all of its election promises.

The Jacobs Well Environmental Education Centre has received \$350,000 for the replacement of its floating classroom, called *The Duke*. *The Duke* is a boat which has been very popular with classes throughout not only my electorate but also all of Queensland. Students come from schools to the north, the south and the west of Queensland to enjoy a day or two out on the boat, discovering the delights of Moreton Bay and its islands and learning how to look after the marine environment. In particular I acknowledge Glen Leiper, the principal of the school, who does an absolutely brilliant job, and also Mr Don Waters, the president of the P&F. They have worked very hard to ensure funding for the boat. I thank the minister for her attention. I also acknowledge the previous minister, who is in the House tonight and who also visited Jacobs Well to see the boat.

Cedar Creek State School, a small school in my electorate, is very happy not only to receive money for buildings but also to receive \$90,000 for a preschool playground. When it is commissioned, this preschool playground will probably be one of the best in all of Queensland. The previous minister also visited Cedar Creek. I thank him for his commitment.

Mr Wells: It shows how dynamic the member was even before she was a member.

Ms KEECH: And I am sure the school appreciates it, too. Ormeau, Woongoolba, Pimpama, Beenleigh Special and Coomera State Schools have all benefited from funding for general learning classrooms and amenities blocks in this budget.

This budget delivers for safe and secure communities. There is no better way to have a safe and secure community than to have a safe and comfortable home. In this regard I thank the Minister for Housing for his attention to Eagleby and its community renewal program. The budget commits a further \$45 million over three years to improving community renewal programs throughout the state. The Eagleby community renewal project is already delivering benefits in the form of better facilities, employment and training opportunities and innovative services based on needs identified through consultation with residents.

Since the Eagleby community renewal program commenced in 1999, the Department of Housing has upgraded 100 dwellings. I have been in some of these, and the residents are very proud of them. They love the new verandas, the fences, the gardens and the paths. They do appreciate what this Beattie government is doing for them. A further 50 dwellings are planned for commencement in 2001-02. The average age of dwellings in Eagleby being upgraded is 25 years, so it certainly is due time for them to be maintained further. The total expenditure to date for the community renewal program in Eagleby is approximately \$1.66 million. I thank the Minister for Housing for his attention and for visiting Eagleby.

Community renewal activities in the Logan area, which includes Eagleby, provide opportunities for the department to involve community-based organisations, such as BoysTown Link-Up, in job creation for local employment. I particularly thank the Eagleby renewal facilitator,

Cheryl Rickards, and also the ERAG president, Ian Bray. I also acknowledge Kylie Woodruff, Lyn McNeilly, Lloyd Twine, Mike and Sharon Maskell and Brook Foy for their attention to the Eagleby renewal program.

This budget has also delivered on police. Happily, there will be an extra 300 police officers across Queensland. I also appreciate the 60 civilian positions that have been allocated. I acknowledge also the Beenleigh Police Community Consultative Committee, which works in my area and which has had tremendous support from the senior sergeant, Craig Hintz. I also acknowledge the new chair, Phil Saunders, and the secretary, Debbie Saunders, who do a fantastic job in keeping our neighbourhoods safe.

Emergency services is a very important area in the electorate of Albert. I welcome the \$517.5 million which will significantly boost fire, ambulance and other emergency services. I note that this is the first time the budget for this portfolio has reached half a billion dollars. It reflects the importance the Beattie government places on looking after Queenslanders in need.

An additional aspect of the budget which most members have overlooked but which I would like to acknowledge is the support for members of parliament and their officers. This Beattie government delivers on its promises, because its members are out there listening to the people of Queensland. Honourable members in this House would know that we are only able to do this if our officers in the electorate and in the parliamentary precinct are resourced to the appropriate level. I therefore thank in particular Mr Speaker, and I ask you, Mr Acting Deputy Speaker, to pass on my personal thanks to the Speaker for the additional electorate officers, for the electorate accommodation support and for the technology support in our offices, which will make all members' work a lot easier.

I also thank Barry Hensler and the staff of Property Services for the work they have been doing in ensuring that the transition of me and the member for Pumicestone to our new electorate offices is made as quickly as possible. Whilst I am thanking parliamentary staff, I think it is appropriate to thank the hardworking Hansard staff, who are here every night supporting the parliament.

I expect the National Party members to complain about the 2001-02 Beattie Labor budget, and they have lived up to my expectations. But the fact is that credit rating agencies continue to reaffirm the Beattie government's economic strategies. Its AAA credit rating is incredibly important for business investment and growth. Despite the slowing of our major trading partners, the US and Japan, the Queensland economy is estimated to grow by 3.5 per cent in 2000-01 and by four per cent in 2001-02.

The primary aim of this budget is to increase living standards and employment opportunities for all Queenslanders. I congratulate the Treasurer and his staff on the presentation and the work that has gone on to get the budget to this stage. Peter Beattie promised that he would lead a government for all Queenslanders, and he has delivered—as, too, has his government. He and his government, of which I am a very proud member, are certainly heading in the right direction. This bill has my full support, and I congratulate the government.

Ms NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (10.37 p.m.): This is a good budget for Queensland and a very good budget for Ipswich. For many years Ipswich was neglected. The thinking was that it was close enough to Brisbane that Ipswich people could access services there. Under the long decades of National Party government Ipswich was not just ignored but also punished for its Labor heart. National Party governments built jails and mental institutions in Ipswich and constructed bypasses so that travellers could go around. This trend began to change under the Goss government, but it has really been turned around by the Beattie Labor government. Now, for the first time, Ipswich's identity and importance as an independent major provincial city has been recognised.

Ipswich is Queensland's fourth biggest city. It deserves, and it is now getting for the first time, its fair share of the dollars and its fair share of the services. This cultural shift can largely be attributed to my predecessor, David Hamill. David was an Ipswich lad to the core. He was born there, he grew up there and, despite the many opportunities life presented him, he never left there. David represented Ipswich well for 18 years, and when he became Treasurer he put some money not just where his mouth is but where his heart is. Now that that cultural shift has been made, I will see that we continue to be recognised. This is a good budget for Ipswich because of its priorities. It delivers on the key areas for me as the member for Ipswich—regional economic development and hence jobs, education, health and social services.

Ipswich is a city that is undergoing an enormous economic and social change. It has always been an industrial city, but an industrial city is not much good without industry. Our woollen mills are gone, only about 100 people work in each of our mines and our power station, and the railway is not the employer it once was.

With leadership from state and local government we are getting new industries and becoming a genuinely smart city with jobs in education, IT, aerospace and tourism. Politically, a commitment to that change is a brave step. We talk about it for a long time before people see real changes on the ground. But I have given it a lot of thought, and it is clear to me that new industries and education are the only way forward for our city. This budget supports that transformation.

The clear highlight of Ipswich's budget is the \$8 million that will finish the workshops project and restore our city's industrial heart. There is also \$1.7 million committed over the next two years to run the workshops once we have built them. The workshops are due to open midway through next year. Having been involved with the project since the beginning, it is something I can now very clearly conceptualise and am looking forward to. The recent steam and steel exhibition, when more than 20,000 people turned up in a single day to explore the workshops site, is an indication of the community's support for the project. The workshops are the industrial heart of Ipswich. In its heyday more than 3,000 men worked there. When the workshops redevelopment is finished, there will be more than 100 permanent jobs in tourism and traditional steam loco maintenance, thousands of tourists will come, and parts of Ipswich will again wake to the sound of the morning hooter.

Ipswich's other significant industrial investment is the \$189 million CS Energy investment to build a gas-fired turbine at the Swanbank Power Station and, in conjunction with that, the three-quarters of a million dollars which the budget provides to upgrade the Swanbank road. A little more than a year ago Swanbank's future looked very bleak, with an ageing station becoming uneconomic compared to the bigger stations in other parts of Queensland. With this investment Swanbank has a future as a clean, green, modern power producer and as an employer. With a gas-fired station, a huge traditionally industrial buffer zone around the site and excellent access to the National Highway, Swanbank would be a great site for industrial development. I will work to see these possibilities realised.

This budget is economically responsible and sees Queensland's sound economic situation maintained. That is a very good thing, but it is not an end in itself. Strong financials mean that we have the money for sustainable services, and that is what is happening in Ipswich as a result of this budget.

Health overall sees a six per cent funding increase, and the \$600,000 for the dialysis unit at the Ipswich Hospital will save dozens of Ipswich people the regular and painful trips to Brisbane for treatment. I have experience from Aboriginal communities in the territory of the strain that having no local access to dialysis puts on families and communities. Without dialysis, families either have to transport patients back and forth to the city where dialysis is available, or people who are unwell and sometimes dying are forced to leave their families for treatment. With this centre in Ipswich, that is being avoided. The fact that the project is being supported by the Ipswich Rotary Club indicates the level of community support.

In Ipswich in recent years big steps have been taken to bring health services to the community, particularly through the now well-established Ipswich Health Plaza and through our Women's Health Centre. This budget supports that service delivery. At the Health Plaza, dozens of people, including my neighbour Nick, utilise the cardiac rehab unit. It is an excellent service, and preventive measures like this are being supported through this budget.

The budget includes significant funding for local schools, including \$50 million over three years for school maintenance. Ipswich schools are older schools, and I will be making sure we get our hands on our fair share of that. In addition, there will be capital works spending, including \$145,000 to finish the new classroom block at the Blair State School, \$90,000 for the Bundamba State School, \$138,000 for the Ipswich West school and \$26,000 for Ipswich Central State School.

It is a fundamental matter of equity that we should not go down the federal government's track of institutionalising the divide between rich and poor with children as young as five who are just beginning school. This budget provides \$2 million for a first-class multimedia and performing arts centre at Bremer State High School, taking a step towards ensuring that local state schools have basic facilities equal to those of private schools.

I believe importantly in this budget there is a 12 per cent increase in funding for disability services. In Ipswich, as a result of the National Party governments' institution building, we have an historical legacy of a big population of people with disabilities. There are 25 per cent more Ipswich people on disability pensions than the state average. People with disabilities rely on government perhaps more than anyone else. As a member of parliament, I would find it very hard to look at a parent and tell them I cannot help with services for their disabled child. With this increase and the improvements that have been made in recent years, at least I will know that we are making real changes. \$600,000 is being provided for the new Jefferis-Turner centre, which will genuinely improve respite care for people with disabilities.

It is important to mention the \$300,000 in this year's budget to improve the Ipswich Watch House, finally bringing it up to the standards demanded by the royal commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody and making it easier for police to supervise prisoners.

Finally, Winston Glades residents will be pleased to know that this year there is funding to build the Ash Street lights. I doorknocked the area recently, and I know that Ash Street and Warwick Road is a dangerous intersection and that the lights are badly needed. I will do what I can to ensure that they are built as soon as possible.

This budget has been well received in Ipswich. This morning I hosted a budget breakfast there which was attended by a good and diverse group of people. In Brisbane when you hold a budget breakfast you get businesspeople; in Ipswich you have a smaller but more complete community, with business people, local government, schools, academics, unionists and people from local welfare agencies. All of these branches of the community are affected by the budget, and in Ipswich all welcomed it. Ipswich people know that under the Beattie Labor government our city is finally being shown the respect it deserves as an independent and historically significant regional centre. I am very pleased to speak in favour of this budget, and I will ensure that while I am the local member recognition of our city continues.

Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (10.46 p.m.): It gives me a great deal of satisfaction as the member for Mulgrave to contribute to the debate on the Appropriation Bill 2001. To say that the electorate of Mulgrave has done well would be a gross understatement. Over \$37 million in capital works has been delivered in the budget—another example of the Beattie government's commitment to public infrastructure and employment generation in regional Queensland. The 2001 budget is a responsible budget, a typical Labor budget, that delivers basic services to Queenslanders no matter where they live in this very vast state of ours. Capital works spending positively discriminates in favour of regional Queensland. I acknowledge that 58 per cent of spending has been allocated to non-metropolitan Queensland.

An examination of the budget papers reveals the big winners on a per capita spending basis as western Queensland, central Queensland and the far north. Several expenditure items in Cairns city will be of regional significance, benefiting the citizens of Mulgrave, Tablelands and Barron River, as well as the electorate of Cairns. I refer to items such as: \$14 million for the construction of a regional facility to accommodate several state government departments; \$6.2 million for the completion of the northern fisheries centre; \$12.6 million for the final stage of the Cairns Base Hospital, the region's key health facility; \$1.1 million for the purchase of a fully equipped plane for the Royal Flying Doctor Service; and \$1 million for the establishment of a regional diversionary centre to meet the needs of persons suffering from the effects of drug and alcohol abuse. As I said before, far-north Queensland has done exceptionally well from the budget. The average capital outlay of \$2,092 per head of population compares favourably with the state average of \$1,500 per head.

Key features of the 2001 budget as an economic document for the state as a whole include: a small surplus of \$24 million; economic growth to reach four per cent; the HIH collapse to cost the state \$230 million over 10 years; \$100 million in jobs programs for young people; 395 extra teachers, meeting almost 50 per cent of the government's three-year target; \$20 million to make inroads into the elective surgery wait list; 300 more police officers; a capital works program worth more than \$5 billion; a forecast that Queensland's growth will produce 33,000 jobs—twice the national average; \$100 million for a Smart State research fund for high technology programs; and \$5 million to provide greater access to public dental health services. The economic purse strings in Queensland are in good hands. The Beattie Labor government is managing our economy in a very responsible manner.

In the Mulgrave electorate, health, education, transport and the environment have been delivered boosts to infrastructure, creating a continued growth in employment opportunities. I welcome the pre-budget announcement of \$2.865 million in funds to combat the serious acid

sulfate problem at East Trinity. \$900,000 is earmarked for expenditure in this financial year. This is a clear indication that the Queensland government is serious about discharging its responsibilities as the holder of freehold title on the degraded former caneland.

Hospitals at Gordonvale and Innisfail are due for a makeover. The Gordonvale Memorial Hospital has the opportunity to enhance its range of services by the establishment of a palliative care hospice at the hospital. Funds will be applied to upgrading beds, wards and carer accommodation and to the upskilling of staff to enable them to meet the challenges this new direction will provide.

The Innisfail District Hospital will be completely renovated and redeveloped to bring its antiquated structure into the 21st century. The quality of services available at the Innisfail Hospital is justifiably highly regarded. However, the efforts of dedicated health professionals and ancillary staff are hampered by the inefficiencies inherent in a facility that is well past its use-by date. The hospital is a virtual rabbit-warren of mismatched levels, narrow corridors and cubbyholes. Maintenance costs are disproportionately high, detracting from the ability of the hospital to deliver services. \$14.4 million has been allocated for expenditure over the life of the project. \$400,000 is available over the next 12 months for planning and design. As with all such projects, there will no doubt be construction difficulties and some degree of unavoidable dislocation. I believe this to be a small price to pay for what will, in due course, be a facility of which we can all be proud.

Education continues to figure strongly in capital works spending. Bentley Park College will receive \$1.1 million as an investment in stage 3 of its building program. A further \$8.9 million has been set aside for future construction works to complete the campus, which will eventually accommodate over 2,000 students. Goondi State School and Innisfail State High School are to be given subsidies of \$129,000 and \$84,000 respectively as part of the government's Cooler Schools Program. In addition, riverbank stabilisation at the East Innisfail State School will be addressed. Some \$800,000 is available to carry out these works to safeguard against erosion that threatened to undermine public assets and which could have posed a safety threat to the students and staff. The Aloomba State School is set to meet growth demand by the allocation of \$106,000 for an additional building.

The Yarrabah community will receive \$185,000 over five years to expand cultural opportunities through an innovative arts initiative. To improve access to the community, \$550,000 has been set aside to carry out works on the range road that has undergone substantial upgrading over the past 10 years. As well, \$637,000 is available to be provided to the Yarrabah Community Council to upgrade the community's sewerage network. The \$474,000 earmarked for the installation of a floodway at Boggy Creek will assist the residents of East Trinity as well as those residents of Yarrabah.

While on the matter of roadworks, I draw the attention of the House to other significant projects that benefit my constituents. A further \$3 million is provided to complete the important bridge over the Russell River, giving more secure access for the people of Bramston Beach during the far-north Queensland wet season. The need for additional passing lanes between Innisfail and Cairns is well recognised. This important safety measure has been steadily addressed during my four terms as member for Mulgrave. I am pleased to note that \$3.7 million is included in the budget to carry out works on the Bruce Highway at the Moller Road intersection. The bridge over the South Johnstone River, which will provide all-weather access to communities isolated by flood waters each year for long periods, is now on track. \$10 million has been included in the forward estimates, with sufficient funds available this financial year to meet the costs of planning and design.

One significant transport issue in the Mulgrave electorate was not addressed in the state budget, and nor could it be. I refer to the need for funds to carry out works to six-lane the Bruce Highway in the southern suburbs of Cairns to alleviate traffic congestion. The recent federal budget failed to provide funds for the necessary work. The current Liberal federal member for Leichhardt has been put on notice by the community. A failure to fund these works will result in an understandable voter backlash against the federal coalition. The state has carried out its planning. The state has provided the necessary documentation to the Commonwealth covering design and implementation. My constituents are angry at the ongoing delays for this project. They will express their anger at the ballot box.

Mourilyan Harbour, operated by the Ports Corporation of Queensland, is to receive funds to carry out what are essential works. \$107,000 is earmarked for minor works, with \$500,000 set aside to construct a public jetty and a further \$600,000 for tug berths to service the port's ability to handle its bulk cargo capability.

During the recent election campaign I announced that funds would be made available for the construction of a new Queensland Ambulance Service centre in Innisfail. I am pleased to advise that the roll-out of funding has commenced. \$100,000 is available for land purchase this financial year, with a further \$500,000 set aside for construction. The Queensland Ambulance Service centre in Innisfail is a magnificent art deco structure. I encourage the community to take steps to ensure that its post-QAS life sees these architectural values protected for future generations. The construction of a new, well-equipped and suitably located ambulance centre will serve the needs of the people of Innisfail well into the future.

I welcome the announcement that funding has been allocated to improve the delivery of public transport in the southern suburbs of Cairns. \$250,000 is allocated to provide for wheelchair accessible bus upgrades. Residents with a disability in Gordonvale and the suburbs of Edmonton, Hambledon Gardens, Centenary Park, Mount Sheridan and White Rock will welcome this initiative. Still on bus transport, I note that the provision of \$100,000 in the Cairns city area and \$35,000 in Johnstone shire is made available for roadside infrastructure to improve safety and to provide relief from inclement weather.

In the run-up to the February election, when detailing policy initiatives within the far-north Queensland region, the Premier committed the government to upgrading boat ramps and associated infrastructure. Although I have not been able to identify much-needed improvements to the Deeral facility as being funded in this budget, I am aware the commitment was for the three-year term. I will continue to push for this project—costing, I understand, over \$300,000—to be brought forward for early implementation.

The young gymnasts, their coaches and parents associated with the Southside Swallows Gymnastics Club will be pleased with the budget outcome. A 50 per cent subsidy of \$186,000 has been allocated that will enable the club to construct stage 1 of the new facilities at Edmonton. Southside Swallows have been a sporting success story. With over 300 members, the club continues to produce champions in all age groups. Their continued growth has been hampered by the constraints of their current facilities.

Another outstanding need has been addressed in the budget. For many years now, I have been lobbying to have constructed at the Gordonvale Police Station suitable disability access. The police station is the only major public building in the community that is not wheelchair accessible. Up to \$20,000 is now available to rectify this anomaly.

Public housing has not been overlooked in the budget. With the provision of screens through a north Queensland-wide initiative, the quality of life for many tenants will improve dramatically. In addition, I am pleased to see that a further \$500,000 has been injected into improving public housing stocks in the Mulgrave electorate.

I commend initiatives announced in the budget to improve the job prospects of unemployed Queenslanders. The Youth for the Environment and Local Communities initiative provides \$20 million over two years. It targets 15 to 24 year olds and will enable 1,200 young people to undertake traineeships in horticulture, waste management and environmental protection. Long-term mature age job seekers are being recognised through a \$5.4 million three-year program titled 'Experience Pays'. This will provide a \$4,000 subsidy to employers who take on workers aged 45 years or over. Five hundred unemployed early school leavers are to be provided with a job opportunity in the Get Set for Work program. \$600,000 is available for intensive training, along with a \$4,000 wage subsidy.

The Beattie government is serious about tackling unemployment. These initiatives, along with a strong Capital Works Program, are well targeted and will be well received. I am privileged to be a member of a government that delivers on its election commitments, a government that delivers to all Queenslanders and a government that is a responsible custodian of the state's finances. Our AAA credit rating is due recognition of this. I congratulate Treasurer Mackenroth on this, his first budget, a genuine Labor budget. I commend the Appropriation Bill 2001 to the House.

Mr ENGLISH (Redlands—ALP) (10.59 p.m.): I rise in my capacity as the member for Redlands to carry out the task that the residents of the Redlands require of me at this time, that is, to interpret the mass of information that we have received in this budget and to advise the people of the Redlands what is in this budget for them. In summary, I can say that the Redlands, like the rest of Queensland, is a winner. I will share the details with the other members of the parliament.

Schools in the Redlands have received a real boost. The Carbrook State School has received \$288,000 for a half teaching block and a further \$28,000 to begin development of additional amenities. The Redland Bay State School has also received \$291,000 for a half general learning area block and a further \$146,000 for the second preschool unit.

In addition to this Capital Works Program, Education Queensland will gain at least 135 more teachers, who will commence in the first term of 2002. The Redland District Special School will benefit from the \$15 million spending on teachers and teacher aides for students with disabilities. The \$16.7 million allocated to the Triple R program—that is, repainting, reroofing and reticulation for schools—will help the older schools such as Thornlands State School, Redland District Special School, Victoria Point State School, Redland Bay State School, Macleay Island State School, Russell Island State School, Mount Cotton State School and Carbrook State School improve their school environment.

But schools are not the only winners out of this budget. The roads in the Redlands will also benefit. An amount of \$150,000 will be spent on improving the intersection of Dinwoodie Road and the Cleveland-Redland Bay Road. A further \$200,000 will begin the improvement of the culverts at Eprapah Creek on Mount Cotton Road. This funding should also enhance the intersection of Woodlands Drive and Mount Cotton Road. I will be continuing to work with the Minister for Transport to bring forward the four laning of Boundary Road, Duncan Road and Mount Cotton Road.

The Mount Cotton Driver Training complex has not been forgotten, either. Having spent a great deal of time at this fantastic facility learning specialist driving skills during my time as a police officer, I congratulate all the instructors and staff on the excellent training that they provide. The staff at the Mount Cotton Driver Training Centre will benefit from the allocation of \$70,000 to upgrade equipment and facilities. It should be noted that this funding will benefit all Queenslanders through the improved driving skills of emergency service personnel, heavy vehicle drivers and the motoring public at large.

I am sure honourable members will eventually get tired of hearing me talk about the southern Moreton Bay islands, but they are areas of high need and this budget has delivered for them. Through the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme—or TIDS—the government has provided the Redland Shire Council with \$95,000 for the construction of Thomas and Lonicera Street on Macleay Island. The Redland Shire Council also received a further \$75,000 for the road construction of Halcyon Street, Wobur Street, Link Street and Perulpa Drive on Lamb Island between Pindarri and Neil Streets.

Money has also been provided to Redland Shire Council and Logan City Council to provide more bikeways so that the residents of the lovely Redlands can get out and enjoy our vast natural assets. My wife, Lisa, my beautiful daughter, Kelsea, and I are looking forward to taking advantage of these bikeways to continue to explore the Redlands on our bikes. I am sure that members of Redbug, the Redlands Bike Users Group, will also appreciate this opportunity.

The students and parents of Chisholm College will also appreciate the \$50,000 that will be spent to provide bus and car set-down areas. Just like the Demtel advertisement, I am forced to cry out, 'But wait, there's more.' The fire brigade is undertaking studies to determine the best location for the future fire station to service the southern end of my electorate, including the suburbs of Redland Bay, Mount Cotton, Carbrook and Cornubia.

Ms Stone: Great suburb, Cornubia.

Mr ENGLISH: I will take that interjection. We have allocated \$400,000 to purchase the land and, once the location is determined, the development of this \$1.3 million project will begin.

The Victoria Point Volunteer Marine Rescue and the Redland Bay Volunteer Coast Guard will also benefit from the \$1 million funding of the State Emergency Service and volunteer marine rescue services. The residents of Redlands are like other Queenslanders: they are winners. Members of the opposition have shown their ignorance of policy development and policy implementation by reviewing this budget in only dollar terms. Yes, the budget is about dollars, and we have heard the opposition complain about not enough money being allocated here and not enough money being allocated there. The budget process is all about distributing the available funds to best address the needs.

However, when interpreting the impact of the budget, the opposition should embrace the visionary whole-of-government approach adopted by the Beattie government. Spending to employ more teachers will decrease class sizes. The flow-on effect will be increased learning outcomes and improved social support for students, with the flow-on effect of improved mental

health for these students. This will potentially flow on to decrease the demand on the Health budget. Spending on education can be viewed as proactive spending on law enforcement.

The opposition must take off their blinkers and view the budget in total. The Treasurer is to be applauded for this budget. To condemn this budget as solid is to highlight the opposition's attraction to smoke and mirrors, the opposition's fondness for show and not go. Yes, this budget is solid. We should shout that from the rooftops. This is a solid budget and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr WILSON (Ferry Grove—ALP) (11.05 p.m.): It gives me very great pleasure to speak in support of the fourth budget of the Beattie Labor government. It has been my privilege to represent the people of the Ferry Grove electorate for the past three years, through three previous budgets and two state elections. The second Beattie Labor government has delivered a responsible and balanced budget with strong forecasts and improved service delivery, and it is a budget that is in surplus. It has delivered a budget for all Queenslanders, whether they live in regional, rural or metropolitan areas.

Queensland is the engine room of economic growth for Australia. Queensland's economic growth is forecast at four per cent, which is above the Commonwealth's forecast of 3.2 per cent and the forecasts of New South Wales and Victoria of 2.75 per cent. Despite the GST impact, Queensland is still the most competitive tax state. Queenslanders will pay on average \$631 less in state taxes than the residents of New South Wales will pay, and \$416 less in state taxes than the residents of Victoria will pay.

Jobs for the future is a key plank of the budget. Queensland is expected to record employment growth of two per cent, which is above the Commonwealth's forecast of one per cent, New South Wales' forecast of 0.75 per cent and Victoria's forecast of 0.5 per cent.

An extra 13,200 new jobs on top of the 27,900 jobs already created by this government since 1998 is another feature of the budget. A total of 46,300 full-time jobs will be supported in the 2001-02 period as a result of Queensland's \$5.1 billion Capital Works Program, and unemployment is expected to fall from nine per cent to eight per cent.

In terms of the Environment department, \$2.4 million has been dedicated to the Beach Protection Authority to implement beach management strategies for areas where erosion threatens properties and residences, and \$10 million a year for the next four years has been dedicated to maintaining national parks across Queensland. Queensland is indeed the Smart State. An amount of \$100 million has been dedicated to create the Smart State research fund, which will invest in leading-edge research and development facilities and build competitive advantages for Queensland through innovation. There is also \$2.6 million to purchase land adjacent to Brisbane's Princess Alexandra Hospital to develop a pharmacy centre of excellence. This budget also provided for 135 extra teachers.

In the area of Health, there is a 6.5 per cent increase in the \$4.1 billion Health budget, including \$20 million over two years to reduce elective surgery waiting lists. An additional 120 health professionals will be employed this year. There will also be \$240 million available to rebuild acute hospital facilities in combination with the planned improvements to community health facilities.

Safe and supportive communities are also a key objective of the budget. There will be an extra 300 police officers provided for as part of the Beattie government's commitment to increase police numbers from 7,644 serving police officers to a target of 9,100 by 2005. A sum of \$97 million has been dedicated over two years to continue work on the new 500-bed secure prison at Maryborough, which started in 1999, and there are an extra 95 emergency services personnel provided for in the budget.

Putting families first is a key plank of the budget. There is a 12 per cent increase in funding for Disability Services Queensland, including additional support for families and individuals. Further, \$134 million is provided to build four new schools, continue staged works at 12 schools and build more than 120 additional classrooms at existing schools. Education expenditure will increase by 9 per cent.

This budget meets the service needs of Queenslanders and sets the sunshine state up as still the most competitive tax state, despite the impact of the GST. The 2001-02 state budget has delivered real results for the residents living in the Ferry Grove electorate. Key capital works projects in the local area include \$295,000 for the construction of a half general learning area block at Ferry Grove State School; \$796,000 for Queensland housing capital works; \$300,000 for preliminary design and preconstruction work for the Samford Road upgrade, which is part of a

total project cost of \$11.9 million; \$360,000 to complete a \$550,000 project to rehabilitate and widen Eatons Crossing Road between Boland Court and Mount Samson Road in the Samford Valley; \$60,000 towards an indented bus bay and pick-up and set-down area at Mitchelton State High School; \$55,000 towards a bus bay and drop-off area in the car park at Ferny Grove State School; and \$60,000 towards a bus marshalling area and car park at Ferny Hills State School.

Ferny Grove residents will also benefit from initiatives taking place in the larger Brisbane North region, for example, new capital works and new magnetic resonance imaging technology at Prince Charles Hospital. There is also \$51.2 million allocated on capital works for the Royal Brisbane Hospital redevelopment, which will include a rehabilitation and dual diagnosis unit. Further, \$3.4 million is provided for a new police station at Stafford, which will relieve the pressure on the Ferny Grove Police Station in my area. An extra \$10 million is provided for the Citytrain Safe Trains project.

A number of statewide programs and initiatives will bear fruit for people living in the north-west suburbs of Brisbane. The government has dedicated \$120 million for the refurbishment of state nursing homes, which is a most commendable element of the budget. A sum of \$34 million has been allocated to capital grants for improvements to sport and recreation facilities. There is \$100 million extra allocated to create 13,200 new jobs and training opportunities, especially for youth and middle age unemployed, under the unprecedentedly successful Breaking the Unemployment Cycle program. A sum of \$50 million is allocated to repainting, reroofing and reticulation maintenance for schools.

Five million dollars has been earmarked to reduce waiting lists for dental services and half a million dollars has been allocated to set up an extra 30 drug rehabilitation beds. A sum of \$15 million over four years for drug and alcohol treatment programs is also provided for in this budget.

Having said all that, this is no time to slacken off the pace of our hard work. I will continue to lobby strongly for my area, particularly the fast-tracking of the upgrade of the Arbor Street-Samford Road intersection. Further, I will continue to work for: the development of the P-12 concept at the Mitchelton State School and Mitchelton State High School; improvements in the electricity distribution network and customer service of Energex in the Samford Valley; greater support and assistance for our invaluable Neighbourhood Watch network and improved community policing; the construction of additional car parking facilities at Ferny Grove Railway Station; and the school hall, bus marshalling and parking facilities at Samford State School.

Those are just some of the issues and projects that I will continue to pursue with the government on behalf of my local community. As my time in the debate is at an end, I will close by commending the budget bill to the House and congratulating the Treasurer and the Premier on a job well done.

Ms BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (11.14 p.m.): I too am pleased to support the Appropriation Bills before the House and the budget of the second Beattie government. It is a very good budget indeed for Cairns and the far north; there is no doubt about that. However, unfortunately I am having difficulty getting the word out as a result of some misinformation that has given the wrong impression to many people in the far north.

A mistake was made in an article outlining the state budget in the *Cairns Post* on Wednesday of this week. The first paragraph of the article said that while the capital works spending for Cairns and the far north was quite substantial, it was over \$70 million less than had been spent on capital works in Cairns and the far north in last year's budget. That was, in fact, an error. It was an error easily made by a reporter who was, I suppose, surrounded by too many pieces of paper and too many books on the budget.

In fact, the situation is this: last year the capital works budget for the far north and the north west was \$545.6 million. This year, it is \$605.1 million for that large combined region. In the meantime, the budget just for the far-north region last year was \$437.1 million and this year it is \$471.8 million, which is in fact an increase of \$34.7 million. Therefore, the headline should have said that not only is it a big spend but it is also a big increase on last year's budget.

The other piece of misinformation was contained in the speech made by the member for Tablelands earlier this evening in the parliament. It seems that her attitude was very much that of not letting the facts get in the way of a good whinge. While she spoke about how most of the budget was being spent in south-east Queensland, she is in error. That is not so. In Budget Paper No. 2, under the section on the capital program, it is written that 58 per cent of capital expenditure is allocated outside of the Brisbane statistical division. Fifty-eight per cent is a clear majority not being spent in Brisbane.

In per capita terms, the member was also wrong. Expenditure on capital outlays is biggest in the Fitzroy and central-west region. The second-biggest per capita outlay is in the Wide Bay-Burnett region and the third biggest outlay is in the far-north and north-west regions. The figures tell the story. For Cairns and the far north this year the per capita spend is \$2,092, whereas in Brisbane it is \$1,352. Therefore, the member for Tablelands clearly has her figures wrong.

She also made the remark that the budget did not mention Golden Circle's plan for a fruit and vegetable processing operation in far-north Queensland. She is again in error. I refer her to the Minister for State Development's portfolio statement, on page 26, which states—

Ongoing assistance will be provided to Golden Circle with the planning for a major new North Queensland fruit and vegetable processing operation.

We have done very well in the city of Cairns, where approximately \$53 million is made available for capital works. Those include around \$3 million in education capital works spending, which is particularly welcome at the two older high schools in Cairns which need an upgrade of facilities. Both the Cairns State High School and the Trinity Bay State High School will have major new buildings within the next year. In the meantime, there is considerable Cooler Schools subsidy provided for Cairns West State School, Balaclava State School and Parramatta State School.

In relation to the arts, we are pleased to be planning to spend \$2.7 million on a Cairns centre of contemporary arts. We would hope to have this money spent before this budgetary year is over. In relation to primary industries, a northern fisheries centre is shortly to be constructed out in the Portsmouth area. It will also be completed within this financial year at a cost of some \$6.2 million.

The Families Department will be building a new diversionary centre. We have had only a temporary facility that is neither big enough nor properly designed. Instead, we will be seeing the construction of a \$1.3 million purpose-built state-of-the-art diversionary centre in Cairns.

\$5.1 million will be spent on the Cairns CBD revitalisation. Moneys will be spent on upgrading Shields Street and the city place to Spence Street. A contribution will also be made to the new waterfront plaza that will be part of the city port works, which will also get under way to the tune of some \$36 million over this next year. I am pleased to say that \$200,000 will be spent on the design and construction of stage 1 of the Woree industrial estate.

The public housing capital works program for the electorate of Cairns is almost \$5 million. Of this, some \$3 million will be spent on urban renewal programs, particularly in the large public housing area of Manoora. That, of course, is matched by continuing funding for community renewal. \$1.1 million over this next financial year will be spent. The program of urban and community renewal in Manoora has been tremendously successful. Already we have seen a rise in community confidence; improvement in training, education and employment; and a drop in youth crime in the area.

I am also pleased to say that we have already turned the first sod in the construction of a new state government office building in the city of Cairns. \$14.5 million will be spent on that project within this budget. The new office block will provide around 4,500 square metres of net letable area over four levels. The project is expected to be completed in mid-2002 and along the way will generate 240 jobs. I am pleased to say that the building is locally designed and will become home for the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Natural Resources and Mines and the Office of Public Prosecutions.

My compliments must also go to the Minister for Transport who, in all divisions of his budget, has taken account of the needs of Cairns and the far north. In the sea port, as I mentioned earlier, we have the wonderful roll-out of the city port project to the tune of \$35.7 million. It will make such a difference to the sea edge of the city. As the saying in Cairns goes, it will change forever the face of Cairns.

In the area of public transport, I am pleased to say that \$300,000 will be spent on a major refurbishment of the Cairns customer service centre. There will be \$250,000 spent on wheelchair accessible bus upgrades. The disability sector particularly will be pleased after having worked hard to communicate the need for this to those in Brisbane.

As far as the sea port is concerned, \$2.4 million will be spent on infrastructure improvements and another \$1.1 million will be spent on general purchases of plant, equipment and information technology upgrades at the Cairns Port Authority.

Rail, of course, is another exciting story. The completion of the Cairns tilt train project draws nearer all the time. Over this next year we will spend \$46 million on the construction of a suitable train and \$105 million for track renewal works between Rockhampton and Cairns.

We have also done well in the area of Main Roads. \$1.3 million will be spent on resealing the Captain Cook Highway in the city area. Those in the western suburbs of Cairns will be very pleased with the \$572,000 allocated for resealing work on Anderson Street. Additionally, there is money to be spent on further work for Sheridan Street and also for some bikeways. This, too, will be welcomed by the enthusiastic children as well as commuters who are frequent bicycle riders in the city area.

I am also pleased to see the increase of some \$36.1 million in disability funding. It does support the promises—the commitments—made in our last term as well as at the time of the last election. That will include such things as an extra \$6.3 million for individualised packages, increasing the total number of adults who have received support under this program to over 1,000. It will include support for approximately 100 additional families with children with a disability through individualised support as well as full operation of nine new family support and respite services across the state of Queensland to provide support for 400 families.

I am particularly pleased to recognise the good work done by the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy Development in Cairns, led very ably by the manager, Olive Monkerud. Her good work has been supported by an increase of 17.9 per cent in the budget for DATSIPD. That, too, will be good news for indigenous people living not only in the Cairns area but throughout the far north.

Cairns business will be pleased to hear of the \$21.5 million allocated to enhance water, sewerage and housing subdivisions in the Torres Strait as well as \$15.3 million matched by the Commonwealth for other infrastructure funding in the Torres Strait. While that will provide lots of local jobs and additional training opportunities for people in the Torres Strait, many Cairns construction businesses will probably also benefit in gaining the contracts to oversee that work.

It is really important, too, to congratulate the Minister for State Development on the refunding of the Cairns Regional Economic Development Corporation consisting of \$250,000 each year for the next four years. That will give them some security to continue the fine work that they have started in clustering, in regional business development and in expansion of new business initiatives in the Cairns area.

Tourism funding to the 14 regional tourism organisations has been increased. Tourism Tropical North Queensland will receive an additional \$35,714 this year. Of course, tourism is the lifeblood of far-north Queensland.

I am aware that other honourable members in this House would prefer to go to bed than hear the wonderful news for Cairns, but it is indeed important for the people of Cairns that this is put on the record.

My congratulations go to the new Minister for Innovation and Information Economy on his granting of \$1 million for IT&T scholarships in multimedia. Information technology services is one of the key areas of economic diversification for the far north. Those scholarships will be particularly welcomed by so many young people who would love the opportunity to break into that field.

The employment programs are excellent programs, and I have no doubt that we will achieve our target of an extra 28,000 jobs over the next three years. In particular I would like to recognise the tremendous funds available now through the specific programs targeting mature age workers and migrants as well as long-term unemployed people.

In the suburbs of Cairns the budget portfolio that matters most of all is the Health budget, and there is extra good news in the Health budget. Not only do we expect to complete, for some \$12.5 million, the redevelopment of the Cairns Base Hospital, not only have we allocated over \$1 million for a new plane for the Royal Flying Doctor Service to support services right across the north Queensland region, but there are also additional funds to reduce elective surgery waiting lists and to reduce waiting lists for oral health services. I suspect that all the millions, notwithstanding this news, will be very well received in the suburbs of Cairns.

I must finish tonight by congratulating and thanking those who work for the public sector in Cairns offices for all their hard work. It is through their hard work, through their information, through their support in the public sector that I am able to do my job. We in Cairns and the far north have scored very well this year. My thanks go to those people. I look forward to working closely with them to implement this fine budget for Cairns.

Mr RODGERS (Burdekin—ALP) (11.29 p.m.): I congratulate the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, Terry Mackenroth, on the budget handed down on Tuesday—a budget for all Queenslanders. The Beattie Labor government has once again shown that it is prepared to take note of the needs of the whole state in progressing a balanced and fair budget process for the benefit of all. The Beattie government has delivered on all of its election commitments. Coming from the Burdekin electorate, it is great to see that 58 per cent of budget funding has gone to rural and regional areas of Queensland.

The electorate of Burdekin is a large and diverse area of the state and has a large range of industries, such as sugar, cattle, coalmining, industrial, tourism, aquaculture, small crops, copper and zinc refineries and other manufacturing based industries. This budget will inject much-needed funding and support into the Burdekin area, something that has been neglected by previous coalition governments. In a snapshot, the electorate and its constituents will receive much-needed benefits from the budget in areas of education, housing, health, emergency services, transport and main roads and primary industries. These are just a few of the areas that will benefit from the budget handed down on Tuesday by the Beattie Labor government.

I turn to the capital works program spending for the area for the 2001-02 budget. In education \$6,559,467 has been allocated for the relocation of the Oonoonba State School. This was a welcome announcement given the confusion of the last few months relating to the future funding of the school. I congratulate and thank the Education Minister, Anna Bligh, for her assistance in dealing with the problems with the school and getting it back on track. There was also a \$122,000-plus subsidy under the Cooler Schools program for the William Ross State High School. Health has also benefited. Some \$500,000 has been allocated this year for the \$12 million hospital redevelopment at Ayr for the preliminary designs. Over \$1 million in total funds have been allocated for public housing capital works programs throughout the electorate.

Roads funding has been another big winner for the electorate. This has been a controversial issue for the electorate over the years, however it will now benefit with \$37,000 for a lighting upgrade to the Collinsville airstrip. The Ports Corporation of Queensland is allocating \$1.8 million plus towards the asset replacement and upgrade of the Abbot Point coal terminal. There is also the allocation of \$500,000 towards a \$2.5 million commitment by the federal government for funding Burdekin safety works on the Bruce Highway. There is also \$1.965 million to complete the construction of overtaking lanes on the federally funded Bruce Highway between McKenzie Creek and the AIMS turn-off. There is also \$100,000 to commence a \$3.7 million project to construct bridges and approaches to Expedition Pass on the Ayr-Dalbeg Road, which is long overdue. Also contained in the budget was \$350,000 to complete the \$970,000 project for widening and rehabilitation of the 3.8 kilometre section of pavement between the Belmore mine and Coral Creek on the Bowen Development Road.

Under the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme, TIDS, the following state government contributions are provided for local government projects. Some \$238,000 has been allocated to continue the reconstruction of road and new bridges at Barratta Road in the Burdekin, with a total subsidy of \$880,000. There is also \$28,000 to commence work for the provision of a parking and bus set-down area at Clare State School in the Burdekin shire, with a total subsidy of \$51,000. Finally, some \$42,500 has been allocated for the provision of bus set-down, kerb and channelling at East Ayr State School in the Burdekin, which is also well overdue.

I turn now to primary industries. Primary industry producers in the Burdekin will have access to more assistance for training and skills development under a \$15 million commitment over the next three years. The government had increased its contribution to the second stage of FarmBis by \$4 million. With the federal government matching it dollar for dollar, that makes for a combined \$30 million program over the next three years. As a member of the state government's Rural Queensland Council, I have raised the need for this increased commitment to FarmBis. I am pleased that the government has decided to allocate \$15 million to the program during 2001 to 2004, \$4 million more than the \$11 million set down in the first three-year stage of FarmBis. The Queensland government is currently proceeding to put in place a state planning group which will include industry representatives to oversee FarmBis operations in Queensland. I welcome the commitment of the Queensland government, in particular the Primary Industries Minister, Henry Palaszczuk, to ensure Queensland farmers have more access to training assistance through FarmBis.

I thank the Premier, Peter Beattie, and all cabinet ministers and secretaries for their assistance when I have brought issues of need for the Burdekin region to their attention. However, before concluding I want to mention statements made in the media which called the

Treasurer a boilermaker. The Treasurer is a former welder. I think that might have had something to do with his putting together the budget. While there were a few leaks before it was finished, the final test is that it is a sound and well-put together budget that will hold up against any challenge put by the opposition. Congratulations, Treasurer. Well done. I conclude by thanking the people of the Burdekin for their help in achieving these positive results for the area. I am sure that with their continued support we can work towards a good result for the next budget as well. Congratulations, Treasurer.

Mrs CHRISTINE SCOTT (Charters Towers—ALP) (11.37 p.m.): I rise to support the budget promulgated by this government. This budget has delivered real results to the people of the Charters Towers electorate who will benefit from a range of funding programs and initiatives. The Beattie government has delivered on every commitment made at the recent election campaign for my local region. The electorate of Charters Towers has received more than \$15 million in capital works spending alone in this budget, and I would like to detail some of that spending. I always say that roads and dams are emotive issues in my electorate. I am pleased to say that we have received millions of dollars for roads, education, health and housing. I am happy to detail here for the people of my electorate just what capital funding we have received. I seek leave to have my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Key capital projects in the local area include—

Education:

\$389,769 in total capital works spending including:

\$200,000 for construction of amenities at Millchester State School and

\$189,769 for a relocatable building at that same school.

Health:

\$1,388,000 for Charters Towers rehab/dual diagnosis and transition units at Mosman Hall. This project is currently under construction and is due for completion and commissioning before the end of this month.

Queensland Transport:

\$10,000 for expenditure on plant and equipment for service delivery—this will be spent in both the electorates of Charters Towers and in my neighbouring electorate of the Minister for Police and Member for Mt Isa, the Hon Tony McGrady and I acknowledge the hard work of my colleague there.

Rail funding includes \$1.116m to upgrade rail infrastructure to allow coal trains to travel up to 80 klms/hr. This involves not only my electorate but those of my colleagues in Fitzroy, Burdekin, Gregory, Whitsunday and Mackay.

Roads:

\$1.6m to complete the widening and sealing of the Peak Downs Highway between Clermont and Nebo—south of Fletcher Creek.

\$3.344m to widen and overlay a section west of Hughenden on the Flinders Highway.

\$4.8m to realign two lanes on the Gregory Development Road between the Cape River and Charters Towers.

\$4m to complete a \$12.2m project to construct to seal standard a section 70klms from Townsville to Ella Creek on the Hervey's Range Developmental Road.

\$1.6m to complete a \$5.4m project to widen and seal a 12klm section between Charters Towers and Hughenden on the Flinders Highway. \$500,000 to continue resheeting sections of the road from Hughenden to the Lynd at a total project cost of \$2.0m.

\$2.0m to continue rehabilitation and widening of the Flinders Highway between Hughenden and Richmond.

Mr Speaker we have also received numerous amounts of funding under the TIDS scheme. State government contributions are being provided for the following local government projects:

\$100,000, towards forming and paving the riverside access road to North Goonyella mine access road;

\$10,000 to commence the upgrade to an 8.0 metre bitumen seal of a 8 km section of the Einasleigh-Forsyth Road in Etheridge shire;

\$200,000 to upgrade and bitumen seal Undara Road, in Etheridge shire;

\$100,000 to commence the construction of concrete floodways at Cameron Downs—Lower Thornville Stamford—Star Downs—Marathon;

\$98,000 towards paving and bitumen sealing Wheeler's Road, within Charters Towers city;

\$50,000 to commence construction of a grid bridge on Villadale Road over the Flinders River, in Richmond shire;

\$80,000 to reconstruct to a bitumen standard a section of Black Jack Road, within Dalrymple shire;

\$75,000 to upgrade and seal Alligator Creek crossing, on a section of the Maxwellton—Kynuna Road, within Richmond shire;

\$50,000 to upgrade various bridges on the local road network in Charters Towers city, with a total subsidy of \$250,000.

I am very pleased to say that the Aramac and Peak Downs shires have approached me to work with them on projects necessary for the advancement of their community infrastructure needs and I will be working with them and talking with the relevant ministers to achieve the aims of these two shires and I state here openly that any shire or city council which

approaches me will find I am happy to work with them for the common good of that council and the people of their community.

All of this road funding will open up tremendous employment opportunities for local workers in the road construction industry.

Every \$1m spent on our roads creates 17 jobs in road construction and related industries.

We're investing in more than just roads, we're investing in the people who live and work in the region.

I also congratulate the Richmond shire on receiving \$425,000 towards the continuing work on their airstrip. The Richmond shire is a particularly proactive one. I have visited Richmond several times lately in the company of the Minister for The Arts and the Minister for Primary Industries and at the invitation of the Richmond shire. It is truly wonderful to see what is being achieved in this western area and I look forward to working with that community in the future towards the increased prosperity of the community and the region.

We have also received \$204,000 in total funds for public housing's capital works program in the electorate.

The \$50,000 for the planning and development of a new ambulance station is very welcome to the people of the Flinders shire.

I am thrilled by this news and I must pay tribute to the Treasurer who was able, in spite of the constraints of a tight and fiscally responsible budget, to find the money for Hughenden.

When I first began to visit Hughenden I could not help but notice that despite the fact that this community had been represented since 1957 by a National Party member—who was for the vast majority of the time a member of the government—they had received almost nothing in the way of new infrastructure from successive National-Liberal state governments in all that time.

This new ambulance centre for Hughenden is a project for which I lobbied my colleagues very hard and I'm pleased to say it is now a matter of when, not if, the new centre will be up and running.

Their dedicated and professional staff are finally going to get a modern facility and the people of Hughenden and district will have better services.

I have made a point of finding out what communities need and then setting out to get it, so I've been in there, taking the fight up to the government, seeking new infrastructure for the people of Hughenden and district. That work has now paid off and the people of the Flinders shire will receive their new ambulance building—congratulations, Hughenden. You deserve it!

Family services:

The Beattie Labor government is delivering on its election commitments to Charters Towers in funding a package of initiatives to support families and strengthen local communities.

\$330,000 over three years has been allocated for funding of Charters Towers family and community support services.

This service will be established to support young people aged to 17 who are at risk of harm. The families of these young people will also be supported by the project.

This Beattie Labor government is committed to tackling the causes of crime. To tackle crime, we have to effectively tackle the causes of crime and we need a range of responses tailored for individual communities.

\$75,000 has also been allocated in the budget for Charters Towers youth crime prevention grants as part of the \$1.5m grants package for regional Queensland.

My local communities will receive \$500,000 over three years for capital upgrades for community facilities. This funding will be used to improve existing facilities as well as building new facilities in collaboration with the community sector and local government.

Youth crime prevention grants are about local communities coming up with local solutions and this program provides a flexible approach to an issue concerning all communities. Successful programs link the organisation with young people at risk of offending in that development of activities aimed at helping those young people and their communities.

We want projects that will assist those children and young people who are most at risk to play a positive and responsible role in their communities

The figures show that government spending on child protection is at an all-time high and child protection officer numbers are at record levels with more employed in Queensland than ever before.

A feature of this strong Labor budget is that it targets issues vital to all Queenslanders. We value families and recognise they are under increasing pressure. That is why we went to the state election with a package of initiatives offering support for all families. This budget has delivered on those commitments. This is a good outcome for Queensland families as well as those within my communities.

Community IT & T skills:

I also welcome a new \$250,000 allocation for the Beattie government's community skills development program in IT & T and urge local groups to start applying now for funding.

The CSDP funds community groups and volunteer organisations in IT&T skills development, using computers or other technology.

This funding reflects the state government's ongoing commitment to up-skilling Queenslanders through IT & T training

The outcome of the community skills development program in IT & T is a benefit to grassroots groups, with local community services and special interest associations being provided with IT&T training for their volunteers.

This program has already helped the electorate of Charters Towers, where \$14,121 has gone to the Richmond Community Youth Centre Inc., providing the youth of Richmond with tremendous support and expertise previously unavailable to them.

This type of funding shows that the Smart State is paying real dividends for all Queenslanders.

Under the first round of the program in 2000-01 funding has been used for a variety of innovative community-based applications aimed at assisting Queenslanders to participate in the information economy.

These include training community association members to build web sites, community web portals, to automate administration processes and store photographic collections.

Associations can apply for CSDP funding to provide on-site information technology resources that enhance the efficiency of the association and increase their value to the community.

This innovative program is open to all community associations in any rural, regional or remote Queensland town or community with a population of 10,000 or less and I congratulate the Richmond Community Youth Centre Inc for their progressive attitude. I look forward to many such applications across the electorate during the next three years as the word goes out about its availability.

Home Assist/Secure Scheme:

North Queensland Home Assist/Secure Scheme benefits from an additional statewide funding of \$1 million provided in the state budget.

Minister for Public Works and Housing, the Hon. Robert Swarten, has allocated \$10.5 million for the statewide Home Assist/Secure Scheme in the Department of Housing's budget.

This represents a \$1 million increase on last year and delivers on the Beattie government's election commitment to boost spending on the Home Assist/Secure Scheme.

The state government funds more than 40 community-based groups to deliver home assist secure services to more than 40,000 households across the state.

In our local area, the north Queensland Home Assist/Secure Scheme is delivered by Blue Care and helps around 300 households a year.

As a result of the latest state budget, it will receive around \$213,000 in 2001-02 compared with \$172,000 in 2000-01.

The Home Assist/Secure Scheme is very popular. It provides information and advice on home maintenance, repairs and security to people 60 and over or those with a disability of any age living in private housing.

One of its important benefits is that it allows elderly people to stay in their own homes longer.

FarmBis funding:

Primary producers will have access to more assistance for training and skills development under a \$15 million commitment over the next three years.

As a member of the state government's Rural Queensland Council, I raised the need for an increased commitment to FarmBis.

I am pleased the government has decided to allocate \$15 million to the program from 2001 to 2004, which is \$4 million more than the \$11 million of the first three-year stage of FarmBis.

Approximately 22,000 primary producers in Queensland have received assistance under stage one of FarmBis.

The Queensland government is committed to assisting individual primary producers chart positive futures and budget funding for FarmBis reflects our commitment.

FarmBis regional co-ordinators operate in Roma, Dalby, Rockhampton, Charters Towers, Charleville, Maryborough and Cairns/Townsville regions.

I welcome the commitment of the Queensland government and in particular Primary Industries Minister Henry Palaszczuk to ensure Queensland farmers have access to more training assistance through FarmBis.

FarmBis activities include business and financial management, risk management, farm performance benchmarking and quality assurance, rural leadership, market development, a positive approach to change, natural resource management and human resource management.

The Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority administers FarmBis assistance, while state planning groups oversee the implementation of the program.

Regional sport and recreation facilities

The Dalrymple and Flinders Shire Councils have been granted up to \$750,300 in funding to upgrade their sporting facilities.

These funds have been allocated in the budget under the \$10m 2002 Sport and Recreation Community Facilities program.

This program provides funds to develop and enhance Queensland sport and recreation venues.

The Dalrymple Shire Council will receive up to \$250,300 towards a new multipurpose equestrian facility and the Flinders Shire Council will receive up to \$500,000 for the construction of a multipurpose court facility including stage and kitchen facilities at Hughenden.

More than \$30m has been given to local governments and sport and recreation groups since the program began in 1998.

This state government wants to give more Queenslanders the chance to enjoy the benefits of becoming active, whether they choose to play competitive sport or take part in fitness classes at the local gym.

We encourage eligible organisations to develop venues that can be used for a variety of physical activities by the entire community, regardless of gender, race, age, ability or location.

Such programs also inject millions of dollars into Queensland's economy which in turn contribute to job creation in industries such as building, venue, management, maintenance and catering.

Mrs CHRISTINE SCOTT: This is a budget for all Queenslanders. Residents will see resources and funding being pumped back into our local areas. It is a Labor budget that provides significant increases in funding and resources to areas of high priority, such as jobs, health, education and

police. This budget will deliver real results for the residents of my electorate and better services and infrastructure for all Queenslanders. I thank the Premier, the Treasurer and our ministers for leading us in this can-do government and for looking after the needs of my electorate, and indeed those of all Queenslanders, in such a caring, compassionate and thoughtful way.

Ms PHILLIPS (Thuringowa—ALP) (11.39 p.m.): I am pleased to speak for my first time in response to the Appropriation Bills. As a local member committed to social justice initiatives for my electorate, and as a community social worker in my previous life, I must start with praise for the areas that have been targeted as priorities in this budget.

In my first speech in this place I identified three areas on which I planned to focus during my first term. I selected these three after considerable consultation with the Thuringowa community. They were to assist marginalised people, particularly families, in our community who lacked the resources to fully participate in the good things of life that living in Thuringowa provided; to encourage ecologically sustainable economic development; and to support the expansion and development of leisure pursuits in creative, cultural and sporting areas for all age groups.

Unemployment is probably the most significant determinant of individuals in our society becoming marginalised. It is an insidious problem that has unfortunate ripple effects through every part of our community. We in Thuringowa have an average level of unemployment in general, but we have pockets of intransigent generational problems. I believe that the budget initiatives will be very significant in addressing these problems.

A sum of \$3.4 million will be available for new jobs initiatives across the northern region, with the majority of this being spent in Townsville-Thuringowa. This money is part of a statewide budget injection of more than \$100 million into the Beattie government's highly successful \$470 million Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative. As I have said, employment is the most important part of the solution to the problems of marginalised people in any community. A job means an income, money to pay rent and support your family, and the freedom to be able to do some of the other things that people in the work force take for granted.

The new Youth for the Environment and Local Communities program will assist young people to obtain nationally accredited qualifications through work in their local communities. I am hopeful that employers in Thuringowa will enthusiastically embrace this program and provide real jobs for these young people once they achieve their qualifications.

The Get Set for Work program will provide intensive employment and training assistance and a \$4,000 wage subsidy to assist unemployed early school leavers. In Thuringowa we have pockets of young people who do not complete high school because of their own or their family's social problems. I am very keen for this program to be introduced into those areas so that these youth can break free of the cycle of poor schooling, unemployment, boredom and crime. There will be a continuation of the successful Community Jobs Plan, additional private sector apprenticeships and traineeships, and incentives for employers to take on apprentices in the building and construction industry. I believe that Thuringowa will benefit from all of these.

Education is another very important priority and an essential component of the Smart State. Education is the key that unlocks a young Queenslanders' potential for success in life. Schools are the backbone of our community. It is here that our young people learn principles for the rest of their lives. They acquire knowledge and information for their careers. They experience social behaviour, learn skills in interactions and understand how to deal with each other. This government's decision to focus on putting resources into education is a further indication of its commitment to the issues that matter—the future of the people in our communities.

In Thuringowa alone, over a million dollars has been allocated for capital works in schools. This includes \$772,000 for a new music centre at Northern Beaches High School. This new school in a rapidly developing part of my electorate is concentrating on music and performing arts education. Last Saturday night I attended a very energetic performance of their production of *A Jungle Fantasy*, displaying the talents of singers, dancers, actors and a small orchestra of musicians. The new music block, which this budget provides for, will allow the school to expand the performing arts curriculum. The budget also includes funding of nearly \$400,000 for two two-space relocatable buildings at Willows State School, in another rapidly developing area of Thuringowa. Kirwan State School will receive funds to address a temporary accommodation requirement.

I also believe that schools in the electorate will benefit from the statewide allocation of \$50 million for the Triple R maintenance program over three years and \$11.9 million to aircondition more than 70 schools under the Cooler Schools program. In addition, over \$1 million

will be spent in the next few years on facilities with the relocation of the Aitkenvale-Mundingburra Special School. While this school is not in my electorate, many families who have children with disabilities living in Thuringowa will benefit from this announcement. All parents, students and teachers will benefit from the massive overall increase of 8.9 per cent in state government spending on education. In fact, the whole community will benefit from such an increase in skills, resources and knowledge.

Some years ago the urban and community renewal programs were introduced by the Labor government to allow communities to renew and re-establish and to work towards addressing problems of crime, particularly that committed by juveniles. These programs have been successful in dramatically achieving both these aims.

These programs are also very significant in dealing with the problems of marginalised communities, so I am very pleased that this budget includes funding for urban and community renewal projects at Rasmussen in my electorate. In fact there is almost \$3 million from Housing for community renewal at Rasmussen, over \$300,000 for ATSI housing and a share in the \$21 million that will be spent in the northern region on new public housing dwellings, some of which will be used for the complementary urban renewal project at Rasmussen. The combined community and urban renewal project is set to revitalise the community. It is designed to address social issues as well as renew the physical infrastructure of the suburb. Hopefully residents will once again feel proud of their neighbourhood.

Health is a very important priority for the people of Thuringowa. It does not matter whether they are families or older residents; the Queensland government has a strong commitment to a quality public health system, providing some of the best in medical technology and health care in Australia. Thuringowa has been given half a million dollars to start work on a community health centre that will be developed on the site which the Kirwan Women's Hospital will vacate when it moves to Douglas.

Residents will also benefit from nearly \$20 million which is in the budget for the new Douglas hospital and \$1 million for the psychogeriatric unit. The new hospital at Douglas will be a wonderful facility for the people who live in the electorate of Thuringowa, as it will be for all residents of our region. The extra \$10 million being injected into public hospitals across the state will help reduce waiting lists for patients in the Thuringowa electorate, as it will elsewhere. Oral health is a very important determinant of overall health, particularly for older Queenslanders. The extra \$5 million to reduce public oral health waiting lists is a great inclusion in the budget.

Transport and Main Roads, with the support of our government-owned corporations, QR and the port authorities, are making a significant contribution to strong economic development, employment opportunities and ecologically sustainable development. This and other infrastructure developments, such as the capital works that I have outlined already, as well as providing for people's physical needs also contribute to the economic development of the community, which was the second of my three priority areas. A tangible example of this is the \$5 million for the upgrading and construction of wagons and so on at the railways workshops, which will not only result in improved freight and travel carriages but also provide ongoing employment for people in our area. I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

In addition, there is \$46 million for the 'Tilt Train' project which will operate out of Townsville and \$6 million for the Rockhampton to Townsville train track renewal.

Public transport and safer main roads are issues of high priority in this Budget. The Queensland Government has a strong commitment to building and developing regions, to road and maritime safety, to improving a clear and demonstrated commitment to improving living standards and quality of life.

Urban development in Thuringowa has resulted in 'ribbon' development, many kilometres from the city centre. I am very pleased that an improved bus service for Northern Beaches will be part of the \$800,000 for Twin Cities bus routes included in the Budget. There is also money for roads—\$775,000 to complete the federally-funded intersection improvements at Mt Low Parkway, over \$700,000 to complete the project at the Allambie Lane intersection, \$40,000 towards the construction of Beck Road, and \$3.25 million to make up the \$7.3 million in prematurity costs going to the Federal Government for them to bring forward their funding of the Douglas Arterial/Bridge. And under flood mitigation, there are funds to complete the Louisa Creek hydraulic upgrade and flood diversion in our area.

Further, the Budget provides for the many families in Thuringowa who are struggling with caring for their children. An Abused Child Trust to service Townsville and Thuringowa is to be established at a cost of \$750,000 over three years, and we will share in the \$2.4 million provided for new child protection and family support services for indigenous families in regional Queensland. And I am very pleased to see increases to the allowances paid to Foster Parents. I recently had the privilege to present ten year service certificates to two wonderful couples in my electorate who have given unselfishly to care for dozens of children in need over that period of time.

We are also being funded to address the problem of crime in the Thuringowa community. Community Renewal has already been proven to be a very successful strategy against crime, and the Rasmussen project is welcome. In addition, we will have a new Police Beat Shopfront at the Cannon Park shopping centre, and there is \$225,000 for Youth Crime Prevention grants for the Townsville/Thuringowa area.

Thuringowa will also benefit from nearly \$3 million to be spent on Ambulance and Fire and Rescue services locally, and from the million dollars to be spent state-wide to support the Drugs Court trial, which will include the investigation of an expansion to the Townsville region.

In addition there is over \$2 million to be spent on a powerline improvement program in the Townsville region, and funding for Townsville Enterprise Limited for convention marketing funding which will bring further economic benefits for all the region.

All of the above initiatives will provide great benefits to the residents of Thuringowa, and I am very pleased to commend the Appropriation Bill to the House.

Ms JARRATT (Whitsunday—ALP) (11.50 p.m.): This is my first budget as the member for Whitsunday, and I have to say from the outset that this is a great budget for the people of my electorate. I congratulate the Treasurer on a budget that will deliver on election promises to all Queenslanders. This is the budget of a compassionate government that recognises and acts on its social and economic responsibilities.

What the people of Whitsunday wanted from this budget was first and foremost an indication that this government was prepared to live up to its election commitments. This has been delivered. Secondly, they wanted a budget that clearly demonstrated that the Beattie government has the vision required to grow and sustain regional development. This, too, has been delivered.

This budget places our children's future in a more secure position than it was in yesterday. We need only to look at the budget commitments to research and development, capital works spending and investment in sustaining environmental integrity to understand this fact. In addition, this budget delivers record spending on education, including funding to extend the New Basics trial to another 20 schools across the state, and the continuation of the Cooler Schools program, which will see schools like those in my electorate airconditioned.

The positive impact of airconditioning a school is not to be underestimated. This is especially true in areas like Whitsunday and Mackay where the humidity in summer literally saps students' energy leaving them unable to concentrate and, at times, just plain irritable. I know that the teachers and students of the Whitsunday electorate will welcome the announcement of an extra \$11.9 million to continue the Cooler Schools program.

There is a great deal more good news for education in my electorate, not the least of which is a \$2.5 million boost to capital works funding in schools across the electorate. I know that the residents of Mackay's northern beaches suburbs will welcome the announcement of a \$500,000 contribution to begin the new school planning process for a new high school in this area. This will be the first high school in the northern beaches, and this announcement comes on the back of an extensive public consultation process which identified the community's preferences in terms of structural make-up.

Other schools in the Whitsunday electorate are also set to benefit from the generous capital works program announced in the 2001-02 budget. Cannonvale State School, for instance, is a worthy recipient of capital works funding that will see new oval development, the construction of covered areas and a new general learning block. Cannonvale State School is in the unenviable situation of having a rapidly growing student population allied with limited potential for physical expansion. The majority of the school's existing buildings hark back to the days when Airlie Beach was a sleepy fishing village with a relatively small and stable school population. I admire the way in which the current principal, Pam Graham, and her staff have gotten on with the job of educating students despite the difficulties inherent in an expanding and increasingly itinerant student population. I know how much this announcement will mean to them.

As a former teacher and mother of two, I know that not all young people go on to access higher education. Nor indeed do I believe that this is a situation that we should strive to achieve. Neither of my sons went on to attend university, yet both are making worthwhile contributions to society through undertaking traineeships which allow them to focus on a hands-on approach to the work force. I therefore welcome the Beattie government's ongoing commitment to improving training and work experience programs for young Queenslanders.

Included in these measures are the Youth for the Environment and Local Communities initiative, which aims to provide an extra 1,200 traineeships in environmental protection, horticulture and waste management, and the Get Set for Work program that will target unemployed early school leavers and young adults. Together with vocational education programs

and work readiness initiatives announced in the budget, these measures give new hope to our young unemployed and school leavers at threat of becoming unemployed. This is especially good news for young people in places of high youth unemployment like Bowen where, over the last few years, the drift of young people out of the town has been met with a growing sense of alarm. These measures offer a hand up and an opportunity to turn the situation around.

The single biggest source of employment in the electorate of Whitsunday flows from the tourism industry. And so I welcome—as I know the industry will—the provision of over \$350,000 to Tourism Whitsunday for tourism and convention marketing and promotion in 2001-02. Tourism is our lifeblood, and while I would be surprised to hear Tourism Whitsunday say, 'That's enough funding, we don't need more,' I am sure that they will recognise this boost to funding as an indicator of the Beattie government's unprecedented support for the important work being done by regional tourism organisations across the state.

Of course, primary industries, and notably the sugar industry, are other important sources of wealth in my electorate. I welcome the government's commitment to the continuation of FarmBis. FarmBis aims to increase farmer participation in learning activities targeted to improve the profitability, competitiveness and the sustainability of their businesses. For many, FarmBis provides the first opportunity for formal training or education since leaving school. I know the rural sector in my electorate will welcome the commitment of \$15 million over three years for this very practical and valuable program.

Just as the Beattie government through FarmBis seeks to ensure that those involved in primary industries have an opportunity to keep abreast of technology and changes in management practices, so other measures in the 2001-02 budget seek to ensure that the agricultural industry survives in the face of climactic change, increasingly competitive markets and the emergence of new and potent plant and animal diseases.

In particular, I want to dwell for just a minute on the Beattie government's Rural Water Use Efficiency initiative. The budget allocates \$14 million over four years to assist with the development of water efficiency methods to assist farmers to improve irrigation techniques and thereby improve water efficiency. This will certainly be welcomed within the sugar industry, as conservation of water and water run-off control are emerging as two of the hot issues for this decade.

The remainder of my speech outlines other specific examples of the benefits held in this budget for the Whitsunday electorate, and I seek leave for this to be incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The creation of a safe and secure community has always been a priority for the Beattie government and again this budget supports and promotes this theme in a variety of ways. In the Whitsunday electorate we can look forward to a new police station in the North Mackay region which will greatly reduce response times to the northern beaches area. Additionally, an increase in police numbers including the services of a rapid response group will enhance the safety and security of all residents in the electorate.

This budget has not neglected the important area of water policing in the Whitsunday area with \$400,000 being provided to fund an amalgamated office and mooring facility for the Abel Point marine operations base. This office will be a shared facility housing both the water police and the Environmental Protection Agency providing both groups with the space and facilities to carry out their important roles in the region.

In terms of emergency services, we have been well served by this budget with a commitment to replace the North Mackay fire station and to refurbish the fire station at Proserpine. Perhaps the most eagerly awaited announcement in terms of emergency services is the budget commitment to begin the process of renewing the ambulance station at Calen. Calen is one of those small towns you pass through on the Bruce Highway heading north to Airlie Beach. The ambulance station at Calen is old and inadequate both in terms of size and facility. The officers stationed at Calen are often called out to attend highway accidents, which as you can imagine are often a tragic and traumatic experience. In addition 24-hour shifts are more the norm than the exception at this rather isolated of ambulance stations. I could not be more delighted that this well-deserving community and these hardworking ambos at Calen have received this good news in the budget.

There is much more to be said in support of the Beattie government's 2001-02 budget that will for now await another forum. Suffice to say that I believe that this budget will keep the electorate of Whitsunday headed in the right direction.

Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (11.56 p.m.): This is a budget for the true believers. It is a budget that the people of Bundamba are very pleased with because it delivers on all Labor's election promises, and it delivers on Labor's principles of social justice and equity. I am very pleased with the increased funding for emergency services. Only recently, I attended the State Emergency Service's expo at the Goodna depot. The SES cadets now number 40 young people, and more are expected to join soon. SES groups are made up of committed volunteers who help us in floods, fires, storms and other emergencies, and I salute them for their dedication to our

community. To Arie and 'Fluff', the cadets, and volunteers—I thank them for all their work in the Bundamba electorate.

In the budget papers, an allocation of \$450,000 has been made for the replacement Redbank Ambulance Station. As all our locals know, the Redbank Ambulance Station is landlocked—surrounded by houses—and has no room to expand. I understand that \$50,000 will be spent this year on plans, land sites, architectural requirements, et cetera, and that \$400,000 will be spent in 2001-02 to construct the new station.

I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of my speech in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

I am aware that the ambulance station is keen to be located either next to, or near to, the new Collingwood Park Sports and Recreation Centre. Both centres are keen to be allocated land opposite Redbank Plaza, on what is known as the circus site. Negotiations are under way with Natural Resources on this land, and hopefully, this will be resolved soon. Co-location seems to me to be a good idea, and as the Redbank ambulance has always had a strong community base, it is commonsense that where there is sport, there may be injury.

In Camira, the sum of \$690,000 has been allocated in 2001-02 to build a replacement station. This is a very important initiative of the government, due to the increasing expansion of Springfield, Springfield Lakes and the new Brookwater Estate.

In health, \$19,224,000 will be spent on the redevelopment of the Wolston Park Hospital with a further \$2,000,000 to be spent in the following year. The redevelopment of this hospital is welcome in our community, but it has caused some pain for employees who have been redeployed, retired out on ill health, or who have taken VERs. I still have constituents coming to me who have not been satisfied with the redeployment process and I urge the Health Department to take action to place those last few employees who feel alienated by the process. The new 'The Park' hospital will be a state-of-the-art facility, and I encourage the hospital to keep up its good work in involving the local community in its activities.

The Wolston Park Christmas pageant was fantastic with staff and patients up on stage presenting hilarious Christmas skits. Many members of our community went to the concert and this helped in breaking down barriers concerning mental health facilities and the implications of a major mental health facility in our community.

I have always taken a keen interest in education. In my electorate, \$7,161,000 will be spent on the new school at Woodcrest, with a further \$234,000 to be spent post 2001-02; some \$2,543,000 will be spent on the stage 1 additional buildings this year, with \$2,810,000 to be spent post 2001-02, and stage 2 of the new school will have \$2,453,000 spent this year with a further \$6,027,000 to be spent post 2001-02.

This is a great result for Springfield and it shows the residents of the community how strongly the government is committed to the Springfield area, the future direction of education in this state and the Smart State. The principal of the school, Mr Neville Smith, is a great leader of the school community, and is a fundamentally committed principal, teacher and human being. I have known Mr Smith for many years as he was the principal of Jamboree Heights State School. The parents and citizens association is very committed to the school and I am always pleased to be at their functions and fundraisers. They had a medieval festival last year which I attended and it raised thousands of dollars for the school. Well done, Woodcrest College. You are indeed a college of the future.

I now wish to turn to the bane of our lives in the Bundamba electorate. It is the Ipswich Motorway, also known as the car park. It is a national disgrace, underfunded by the federal government for years. Two weeks ago, I, along with many of my constituents, were caught in the gridlock along the motorway for 1.5 hours, when there were two accidents at the Logan Motorway. The first accident involved a five-car pile-up like 'dodgem cars' and the second accident had two cars involved. It took over 40 minutes for me to travel from Redbank Plaza to the Shell service station on the hill at Goodna. The motorway was a mess. Everyone was using mobile phones to the extent that the network could not handle the number of calls. After 10 minutes, I finally got through to Adam of Brisbane traffic control to advise motorists on the roads to travel along Redbank Plains Road and along the Springfield bypass as an alternative route. People were docked their pay, people missed doctors' appointments and had other arrangements totally disrupted due to the motorway mangle.

I am pleased to see in the budget that \$64,000,000 has been budgeted to six-lane the motorway between the Logan Motorway and Riverview. Some \$1,000,000 will be spent this year on planning for this lane expansion as it is a major job in a highly built-up area. The planning will involve extensive engineering planning as in no way do we, as local residents, want a repeat of the Logan Motorway spaghetti junction. We would rather the engineers take longer in the planning stages, than stuff it up, resulting in us having to put up with unsafe, dangerous road conditions, like which currently exist. We also need to keep our locals off the motorway as much as possible. Therefore, planning needs to be undertaken by Main Roads and Ipswich City Council to link Riverview to Collingwood Park and link Collingwood Park to Goodna on local roads. The Riverview-Collingwood Park link will be completed in 2004, but we also need a link from the Redbank Plaza through the rifle range to Goodna. These links would take thousands of local cars off the Ipswich Motorway. Furthermore, at Redbank a pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle access will be built at a cost of \$2,000,000. Some \$260,000 will be spent on this project this year.

\$13 million will be spent on building the Synergy energy park as part of the Carole Park estate. I understand it will be started soon. The Department of Employment and Training has allocated some \$250,000 to the Goodna Neighbourhood House to provide job training so that our locals are job ready when this estate comes on line. Training will be provided by the Bremer Institute of TAFE.

The Goodna Neighbourhood House should be congratulated on auspicing this great program for our community. The Goodna TAFE House will also hold its inaugural courses within the next couple of months when Ipswich City Council approval has been obtained. This is TAFE in the community playing a leading role in the delivery of training for our local people. One day we may have further TAFE houses in other suburbs, delivering literacy and numeracy, job training,

resume writing and other courses. To Mike Guy and his institute council, and all TAFE staff, may I thank you for your dedication in taking TAFE to the community and playing a leading training role in our area.

The Redbank railway workshops will benefit from this budget. There are a number of QR projects that will be built at the workshops around the state, including Redbank. These include:

\$11.2 million to complete (rail) coal fleet rolling stock upgrade with work to be carried out at the Redbank workshop and in Rockhampton.

\$340,000 to complete manufacture and modification of Mount Isa coal (rail) wagons.

\$3.4 million to overhaul of 58 maxi-diesel electric locomotives.

\$17.2 million for general unit retro-fitting of rail fleet.

\$5.5 million to design and construct five power cars for airconditioned fleet.

\$131,000 to complete Redbank Rail Workshop redevelopment.

\$4 million for upgrading container carrying rolling stock.

\$3.88 million for various minor acquisition and construction projects.

There will be a new Police Beat in the Redbank/Goodna area and a police shopfront in Springfield. These beats mean that communities get to know their local police; they are reassured of their safety as they see more police on the beat, and it certainly deters crime being committed. The more police beats we can get, the better. In Riverview, our beat copper, Glen Lamont, is an important part of our community. He even got his head shaved as part of the Riverview State School's 'shave off' Leukemia Foundation fundraiser. And whilst on this point, the Riverview State School raised nearly \$2,000 for this great cause. It was a great effort.

This financial year, the Goodna Youth and Community Centre will be opened and the Collingwood Park Sports and Recreation Centre built. The Goodna Centre is near completion, with only landscaping to be completed as part of a Community Jobs Plan. The Collingwood Park Sports and Recreation Centre is well on its way in the planning stages with strong support from the community, the council and the Collingwood Park State School community. There have been other Community Jobs Plan approvals announced, and more expected this financial year as jobs and training are key commitments of this Beattie Labor government.

I could go on and on with our commitment as a Labor government to the community of Bundamba. But, I'll conclude with two important functions to be held in our electorate within the next few months that don't cost a lot of money, but mean a lot to our people. I'll be holding a justice of the peace seminar soon to update our volunteer JPs on their duties and also for our high school legal studies students on the role of JPs. I'll also be holding a volunteers function and handing out certificates in recognition of our community volunteers. Volunteers like those at the Woogaroo Meals on Wheels, who last Saturday held their 20th Anniversary, and who are vital in Bundamba. There were over 60 volunteers at the Meals on Wheels celebrations and long-time Redbank residents like Christina King and Vera Eustace, to name but two, will be there giving great support at the function. On behalf of the Bundamba community, may I say thank you to our Labor government for delivering on its promises, and delivering for our people.

Debate, on motion of Ms Molloy, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Sport) (11.58 p.m.): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Barramundi Nodavirus

Mr ROWELL (Hinchinbrook—NPA) (11.58 p.m.): Minister Palaszczuk's Department of Primary Industries is yet again showing its lack of understanding of the importance that primary producers place on pest and disease management in Queensland by allowing diseased barramundi to be released into waterways through its fish stocking program. The DPI has issued a policy that would allow the release into Queensland waterways of barramundi which are infected with nodavirus.

Nodavirus is one of the most serious diseases commercial barramundi farmers face in Australia. It is recognised in Europe as the major threat to agriculture, and our DPI is willing to release fish with this disease into our river systems. Nodavirus is a significant aquatic pathogen that affects the nervous system of fish. It is thought to be transferred vertically, that is, from parent to offspring, but there is evidence that the disease is also transmitted horizontally from one fish to another. Nodavirus may also be spread to different species, such as murray cod. The idea that the DPI is knowingly allowing the release of a nationally reportable disease which is internationally listed is totally unacceptable.

Barramundi farming is a growing industry in Australia. In three to five years the industry expects to produce over 3,000 tonnes annually. The industry is represented by a national affiliation that has membership in every state.

Members of the Australian Barramundi Farmers Association are concerned with the lack of regard DPI has for their situation. In the past, nodavirus has been responsible for significant

economic loss in the barramundi industry. Significant cost cutting within the DPI is obviously dictating policy decisions on very important issues such as disease control. The barramundi farming industry believes the DPI is not prepared to commit funding to release nodavirus-free fingerlings into our waters, instead relying on inadequate, make-do and dangerous policies.

The DPI policies are irresponsible and provide no support for an emerging new industry. There is insufficient assessment of the risks of releasing fish with nodavirus. The DPI has shown no commitment to introducing regular diagnostic screening tests into its replenishing fish stock program, even though it has been granted funding to develop the polymerase chain reaction test, which could detect fish carrying this disease.

Further examples of the DPI's poor commitment to managing the pest and disease in Queensland can be highlighted by the fact that no-one has been hired to fill the job made vacant by Dr John Norton, a key fish pathologist who retired from the Townsville laboratory last year.

Time expired.

Kingston State High School

Mrs DESLEY SCOTT (Woodridge—ALP) (12.01 a.m.): Kingston State High School was once a larger, award-winning school. The years passed and the school population dwindled. There is something very sad about empty school buildings. However, I am happy to announce to this House that they are once again winning awards, somewhat of a different kind, and the buildings are again bustling with activity, thanks to Community Renewal and the vision of principal Margaret McLean, director of the community access centre and centre for continuing education Morag Richardson, and the guidance of regional director of education Ron Daniel.

In November 1998, Morag Richardson was running evening classes at Kingston high when she was contacted by the Department of Housing to say that the school had been selected for Community Renewal funding to commence a community access centre. With a great deal of planning and effort, the centre opened in May 1999, offering a range of programs covering computing, personal development, literacy and numeracy. While originally seeking to attract 15 to 24 year olds who were considered at risk, an increasing number of mature age women started attending, seeking friendship and work skills. This led to the expansion of the program under funding from DETIR. Many teenagers who had dropped out of formal school enrolled to complete their Year 10 and Year 12 education and then moved on to community courses. A need then emerged to assist young people—especially, as it turned out, young males—to find work. A solution was found through the Community Jobs Plan. Funding of \$300,000 was provided to improve the amenities at 10 Logan city schools.

This centre, painted in vibrant colours—pumpkin and blue—does not look or feel like a school. It has been responsible for rescuing countless young people who had no dreams for the future, no hope of work. There are now in excess of 700 students from teens to 80 year olds. They are enrolled in year 10 and year 12 subjects and practical courses such as art, woodwork, parenting, motor mechanics, landscaping, flower arranging, literacy and numeracy. On 26 January 2001, they were awarded the Davida Steele award for outstanding community service by Logan City Council, and have this month been declared a finalist in the Logan city business achievers award.

This centre truly displays excellence in learning and innovation. It touches many hundreds of lives, from students aged 15 and over to senior members of our community. I thank Minister Matt Foley for accepting my invitation to visit the centre last week and believe this institution—

Time expired.

Toolooa State High School Interact Club

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (12.04 a.m.): I rise to commend an enterprising young group of men and women from Toolooa State High School who have commenced, under the auspices of the Rotary clubs of Gladstone Midday and Gladstone Sunrise, the first Toolooa State High School Interact Club. The charter president, Aaron Unger, very ably welcomed visitors and guests to the inaugural dinner, to which I was privileged to be invited. The district governor representative, Gail Sellers, outlined the new responsibilities of the Interact Club, and the various officers went on that evening to take their oath of office. Vice-president Kimberley Flack, secretary Sara Aggett and treasurer Angela McArdle, along with directors Danielle Coles, Nathan Cutts, Adam Melksham, Nicole Warner and members Shalin Batterbee, Danel Dern, David Bletchly,

Heather Raas, Kingsley Caldwell, Candice Tams and Luke Stockwell, make up the inaugural members of that Interact Club.

During the evening we saw a video of just what Interact achieves worldwide. It is a service and social club for young men and women aged 14 to 18 years. There are more than 6,000 clubs around the world. Each one has to be sponsored by an established Rotary club. While the Rotary club provides guidance and inspiration, the young people are self-governing and self-supporting, giving members a chance to develop a range of leadership skills while still learning the value of team work. Those leadership skills were evident even on the night of the inauguration.

Interact clubs take a hands-on approach to community service, as in hands on a paintbrush, a hammer, a sewing machine. Some of the examples that were given on the night were Interactors in Mexico who painted an orphanage. They installed new equipment in playgrounds, pruned an orchard and put up fencing around the grounds. In Brazil, they mended enough clothing to outfit several hundred needy families. In Cyprus, Interactors painted cartoon figures on the walls of a children's hospital to cheer up the young patients. They conduct blood drives and traffic safety campaigns; they alert people to the danger of drug abuse and AIDS; they plant trees, repair nature trails and promote recycling efforts. They are involved in Rotary International's massive effort to immunise all children worldwide against the dreaded disease of polio. While we do not face that risk greatly here in Australia, it is certainly a worthwhile program.

The inaugural Toolooa State High School Interact Club showed their energy, their enthusiasm and their vision on the night. I believe our region and the Interact clubs in Australia and worldwide will benefit from the contribution that Toolooa State High School members will make, and I look forward to seeing the successes that they as a group achieve in the near, the middle and the distant future. I am sure they will make a great contribution.

Refugees

Mr LEE (Indooroopilly—ALP) (12.07 a.m.): 2001 years ago, a family of Middle Eastern refugees fled persecution in their own country and lived for a time in Egypt. Very little is known of the time that Jesus and his family spent in Egypt, but I know this: they were not subject to mandatory detention, they were not locked up, and they were not forced to suffer the uncertainty of life on a temporary protection visa.

The appalling way that the federal government treats refugees ought to be condemned as a cold-hearted sham. The Howard government has created two classes of refugee: one with a future of permanent residency, access to services and income support; and the other with an uncertain future, limited income support, no family reunion rights, and no Jobsearch assistance. I have students in my electorate who fall into this category; unaccompanied minors 15, 16 and 17 years old who fled persecution in their homelands and are now living in a new country with little support and a very uncertain future—in fact, potentially three years in this country with an uncertain future. The Howard government not only financially impoverishes these young men; it spiritually impoverishes them too by making them live with uncertainties for years.

We have a moral obligation to welcome asylum seekers and to allow them to live with their families in peace and certainty. It is them today, but there is a real potential that it could be us tomorrow. I have a group of mainly temporary protection visa holders who play soccer in my electorate every Saturday at 3.30 p.m. at Wests Community and Sporting Club in Chelmer. The stories of the Hazara soccer group have convinced me that the federal government is wrong on this issue. If honourable members are not convinced by my words today, they are very welcome to join all of the boys and myself and to listen to their stories. I am absolutely convinced that if they listen to those boys, they will know exactly how wrong the federal government is on this issue.

Australia is a country that has been built upon Aborigines and an influx of refugees and migrants. The Howard government has no right to treat refugees in such an inhumane manner. The Howard government has no right to lock people up before determining the length of time that they can have in a country that is free from warfare and political disrepute. These people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

It is no wonder that there are riots at detention centres. These people have come to Australia hoping for a life free of violence and hatred, and they are locked up in detention centres that make prisons look like resorts. I am by no means condoning the violence that detention centres throughout Australia have been experiencing, but I understand very personally why such violence is occurring. The federal government's attitude to asylum seekers is a sham.

Time expired.

Calamity Jane; Blackrock

Mr COPELAND (Cunningham—NPA) (12.10 am): I rise to highlight the very vibrant cultural scene that exists in Toowoomba. Last week I had the great pleasure of attending two fantastic performances in that city, the first of which was held at the Empire Theatre. If members have not been to Toowoomba and visited the Empire Theatre, I can say to them that it is the most amazing theatre in any regional city not only in this state but also this country. It certainly rivals anything that exists in any of the major cities. It is an art deco theatre, I think built in the 1930s, that was renovated by the Toowoomba City Council a number of years ago. It is an absolutely brilliant facility that any city would be proud of.

Last week the Toowoomba Philharmonic Society put on their annual production at that theatre. It was a production of *Calamity Jane*. It is a show that a lot of people know well and it is certainly a show that continues the long tradition of the philharmonic society's annual productions being absolutely first class and professional. It is an organisation that has a very long history. It has been going in the Toowoomba city for an incredibly long time and it has a terrific reputation for the productions that it puts on.

The star of the show, both in terms of the title of the production and in terms of performance, would undoubtedly have been Ruby Slipperz, who is a very well known local radio station celebrity in Toowoomba. Ruby was absolutely brilliant in the title role of *Calamity*. It was as if she was born to play the role. I think that she has aspired to play that role ever since she was born. Ruby was completely believable as *Calamity*, and I think even more so than Doris Day could ever have hoped to be. You could actually believe that Ruby could fight and run with the best of them.

Joseph Duke filled the role of Francis Fryer. He is an outstanding young talent. He is 15 years old, still at school and playing on the stage with all of the command and ability of people much older. He is a young man with an incredibly big future. The rest of the cast were just as good: Don Burge as Wild Bill Hickock, Barry Ledger as Lieutenant Danny Gilmartin, Roxanne Beer as Katie Brown, and Adrian Smith and Amanda Holland Chalmers in supporting roles. The entire ensemble cast was absolutely brilliant.

The second show was very different, but no less impressive. It was put on by the USQ performing arts department, which is a very well known and very capable department. It was a performance of Nick Enright's *Blackrock*. Many people would know this play. Some years ago it won an AWGIE award and has also been made into a film. It was put on by the final year acting students. Production support was supplied by the stage management students and it was directed by guest director Sue Rider, a Queensland Matilda award winner and former artistic director of La Boite.

It is a very dark but very moving and interesting play. Certainly it has a lot of relevance for young people. The USQ performance centre was filled with very large audiences made up largely of school students not only from the Darling Downs region but also from places as far afield as Brisbane and further west.

University of Queensland, Ipswich Campus

Ms NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (12.13 a.m.): Anyone who has ever dealt with bureaucracy as an ordinary client will know that it almost seems designed to kill you. Once, between completing a university course and obtaining a job, I spent two weeks on the dole, and between the dole diary, the disinterested staff and the mind-numbing queues I found it a frustrating and demoralising experience.

For many Ipswich people, this frustration is a fact of life, with their time eaten up by Centrelink, the Housing Department, sometimes the Police Service and the many welfare agencies that provide basic support to the many people who need it just to get by. For anyone who does not speak English as a first language or who is not particularly literate and who has to deal with the maze of uncoordinated government departments, I am sure that it must be a nightmare.

In Ipswich I am pleased to say that significant steps have been taken to untangle that maze. Through the Goodna Service Integration Project, which is located in Jo-Ann Miller's electorate of Bundamba, real steps are being taken to coordinate services. In conjunction with the service integration project, some of Ipswich's most senior bureaucrats have gone back to university, taking on the year-long Graduate Certificate in Interprofessional Leadership at the University of Queensland Ipswich campus, which is located in the heart of my electorate.

Through the UQ Ipswich course, Ipswich administrators are learning and thinking about the principles of community development. They are thinking about how to deliver services that are targeted to the needs of local people rather than being poured down from the top by government. They are building relationships with each other and with the community. They are measuring the effectiveness of what they are doing and they are sharing information and advice.

The UQ leadership course is bringing a real cultural shift to the way in which services are delivered in Ipswich. Recently I attended the graduation of the first cohort of students. There, those who had studied talked about the course. They talked about the frustration that they had felt previously in trying to deal with each other across institutional barriers, the constraints of client confidentiality, and a simple lack of time. They said that in addition to the skills that they have learned and the research that they have done, the simple fact of knowing one another has made a big difference.

The very fact of senior public servants being willing to learn and being focused on service delivery, not institutional maintenance, is a positive cultural shift. I have no doubt that the Ipswich people who have accessed these services will see the benefits. I would like to congratulate Bruce Muirhead on the leading role that he has taken, along with Gracia Catalano, Wayne Faulkner, Jamie Quinn, Jenny Blowers, Peter Videroni and others who have done the course. Their commitment says a lot about them and their professionalism. I am sure that the people of Ipswich will see the benefits of the work that they have done.

University of Queensland, Veterinary Science Course

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (12.16 a.m.): During the last parliamentary sitting I sought leave of the House to be absent for the purpose of speaking with the Prime Minister about federal government funding of the Queensland University's veterinary science course. I did speak to the Prime Minister and asked him if he would consider quarantining part of the university's federal grant money specifically for the veterinary science school. His words to me were, 'I can't do that. The university would not agree.'

I am disappointed that the Prime Minister has refused to take a lead on this important matter. It is just not good enough. Funding to the veterinary school has been cut to the stage at which the school has had to sell some of its farms, animals and equipment to balance the budget. This week in the *Queensland Country Life* newspaper we read about the death knell of a Queensland institution, the dispersal of the veterinary school's Australian stockhorse stud. The closure of the University of Queensland's Pinjarra Hills large animal unit is a tragedy for this state. In one day, years of breeding and development was wiped out.

On 19 May, I led a march consisting of more than 200 people protesting the closure of the University of Queensland's dairy clinic in Kenilworth. As a result of that protest, the university decided to continue training vets in Kenilworth through an agreement that is being negotiated at the moment with the town's vet. Veterinary science students who hired a bus and came to Kenilworth for the protest told me that they were reduced to doing assignments instead of undertaking practical work because of budgetary constraints in the veterinary science course. This is outrageous. We cannot expect our vets to learn about animals and diseases simply from textbooks.

We read about the horrific damage caused in Europe by foot-and-mouth disease and the ongoing tragedy of mad cow disease, and this week there was even a false—thank goodness—report of foot-and-mouth disease in New Zealand. Veterinary science is one of the most important courses offered by Queensland University. Queensland's economy depends on the health of its livestock industry. It is vital that we have highly trained vets ready and appropriately equipped to combat whatever diseases threaten this state.

Until the federal government requires the Queensland University to allocate sufficient funds to the veterinary science school, we may continue to see the demise of more of the veterinary science school farms and the veterinary science course, which is presently recognised as one of the best in the world. I call on the Minister for Primary Industries and the Queensland Premier to use any methods at their disposal to try to convince the federal government of the seriousness of this situation.

Feral Animals

Hon. K. W. HAYWARD (Kallangur—ALP) (12.18 a.m.): I rise in this parliament to raise the issue of feral animals and the impact that they are having on native animals, including bird life, in

national parks and other parts of Queensland, particularly when those feral animals are not controlled. Feral animals such as pigs, dogs, foxes and cats are in large numbers and their population is exploding in forestry land and national parks.

As an example, and with reference to your own area of Glass House, Madam Deputy Speaker, which you represent so ably, I have personally seen such pests in the vicinity of Mount Beerwah in the Glasshouse Mountains. Most of these feral animals are aggressive killers against which native animals have little hope. The risk is that if eradication measures are not undertaken, native animals are at risk of extinction in parts of our state. What a tragedy that would be. It would be a terrible reflection on all of us if we sit by and allow that sort of carnage to happen in the 21st century.

The environmental wetlands from Brighton, Boondall and the Brisbane Airport to the Port of Brisbane are internationally recognised for their bird life, yet those fragile ecosystems are under threat from foxes and cats. I am told that there has been no attempt made to reduce the number of feral pests from this area, with the exception of the Port of Brisbane Corporation, which undertakes a regular feral animal control.

Mr Johnson: How do they do that? Do you know?

Mr HAYWARD: I am not sure how they do it. I have just been told that the Port of Brisbane does it. The point is that the problem is obvious. While the Port of Brisbane Corporation makes the effort to take action on feral animals, there is no apparent coordination between the Brisbane Airport and local and state government. Dealing with the issue becomes somewhat hit and miss, because the animals are moving around all of the time.

Pigs, dogs, foxes and cats exist in large numbers. When dogs and cats go feral in the bush, they are very effective killers. Native wildlife is no match for them. These feral animals live in forestry land and national parks throughout Queensland. As I said before, the Glasshouse Mountains are a prime example. If action is not taken, the wildlife population of Queensland will continue to be killed and eventually threatened with extinction. Human life, of course, could also be at risk from diseases such as foot-and-mouth, rabies and other parasitic diseases that could be spread by feral animals travelling through the corridors of national parks and forestry areas throughout Queensland.

What is needed is a coordinated, systematic approach to feral animal control, recognising intergovernment sensitivities and responsibilities with appropriate funding to ensure that the eradication plan that is developed can be implemented with vigour. What a terrible tragedy we could take with us into the 21st century.

Time expired.

Timber Industry

Ms LEE LONG (Tablelands—ONP) (12.20 a.m.): Last year Queensland celebrated 100 years of forestry. Certainly, the first 80 or 90 years gave us something to celebrate. During this period, forestry made a significant contribution to the economy and development of the state of Queensland, and has been a major source of employment in regional areas. A sensible, professionally devised and scientifically based management system for state forests provided a balance between environmental conservation, watershed protection, timber and honey production, grazing and public recreation. Queensland built up a core of highly skilled forest managers and developed sustainable forest harvesting practices that were recognised internationally as world's best practice. Plantation programs were initiated throughout the state in a responsible endeavour to supplement our natural resources and to provide for our timber needs into the future.

However, the last decade has been a sorry one for the former forestry department, which has been fragmented and sections hived off into other bureaucracies. Large areas of forest that had provided a sustainable supply of milling timber and other products have now been withdrawn from use. The large number of sawlogs harvested from natural forests has continued to decline and there is a similar trend in harvesting timber from natural forests on private land. The expansion of plantations has almost ceased and we are increasingly dependent on imported products.

In October 1997, the Commonwealth and state governments publicised a joint policy grandly named Plantations for Australia, the 2020 vision. Its aim was to treble the area of plantations by the year 2020. Sadly, Queensland is making only a minimal effort to achieve its quota of the national target.

My electorate of Tablelands has been amongst the worst affected areas because of this negative approach to forestry. The sawmilling industry, which contributed so much to the local economy, has been decimated by policies banning timber harvesting from virtually all native forests. We have the land and the climate for timber production, we have technical forestry expertise equal to the best in the world and we have the financial capacity for a major expansion of plantation areas. Why are we not utilising those marvellous assets?

In the five years that DPI Forestry has been a commercialised entity, it has yielded average net returns to Queensland Treasury coffers of some \$18 million a year. Therefore, it is a serious indictment of the Queensland government forestry policy that we remain a net importer of timber. But it is the ultimate in hypocrisy on the part of the government to ban sustainable timber production in so many of our forests while we continue to import timber from unsustainable and environmentally damaging logging operations in the South-East Asian and the Pacific regions.

Wasp Creek Rural Fire Brigade Shed

Ms KEECH (Albert—ALP) (12.24 a.m.): Last Saturday night, 16 June, the skies of Coomera were lit up with fireworks to celebrate the opening of a new Rural Fire Brigade shed for the Wasp Creek service. After six years of hard work, the opening of the new shed was a real reason for festivities. The new premises are great. They even have a mezzanine floor for training and, hopefully, some relaxing by the hardworking firefighters. The premises are very much needed in the enormous 2,800 hectares that is the brigade's responsibility.

The past decade has seen a rapid increase in population within this local area, which has resulted in additional pressure on the local urban and rural fire brigades. The new state-of-the-art shed will significantly improve the working and training conditions for local fire crews. It will also provide much-needed storage for the brigade's vehicles and equipment. Getting the shed to the opening stage represents best practice in government, community and business working cooperatively together to achieve excellent outcomes to make our communities safer.

The fire warden of the Wasp Creek service, Charlie Smith, is to be commended for his entrepreneurial spirit in finding innovative methods to get his shed and the service up and running. If honourable members knew Charlie as I know Charlie, they would be aware that he is a man that one cannot say no to.

An honourable member interjected.

Ms KEECH: No, Christine is his wife. When he approached Trevor Chappell, the managing director of Austcorp, a local land development company, for funds to buy the material for the shed, Trevor was very quickly convinced to donate \$30,000. As the member for Albert, I thank Trevor, Austcorp and his state manager, Peter Lovegrove, for their generosity in contributing to a safer Coomera community. Without their devotion, we would still be waiting for the fireworks last Saturday night.

Through their own fundraising and that of the community, \$35,000 was raised by Wasp Creek itself. This included donations of labour, machinery and materials from local tradespeople. I am also pleased that the Beattie government was able to provide \$5,000 towards the construction of the new facility.

In the International Year of the Volunteer, the opening of the shed was an ideal opportunity to recognise one of Coomera's most dedicated and hardworking volunteer families: Charlie and Christine Smith. Through their leadership and guidance, Charlie and Christine are the type of people who make my electorate of Albert a great place to live, work and play. I know that there are many families in Coomera today that will sleep more soundly knowing that there are volunteers like Charlie and Christine Smith watching over them and their properties.

Hospital Waiting Lists

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (12.27 a.m.): I rise to speak about the continuing problems caused by the lack of ophthalmology services on the Sunshine Coast. This problem has a human face. An 89 year old gentleman came to see me. He is a very sprightly and fit 89 year old gentleman. He had to wait nearly two years just to get an eye appointment. Now he could wait up to a year to get the operation that he needs on his eyes. As this gentleman says, he intends to live to be well over 100. He is not going anywhere, but he would certainly like to have his eyes fixed.

The problem is that the Health Department and the Health Minister, who have been told about the long delays in appointment times at Nambour Hospital and delays for subsequent surgery, have done nothing to act upon the information in the last two or three years that we have been raising the issue. In fact, in 1999, the gentleman was advised in writing by the hospital that he would have to wait in excess of 18 months for his appointment. In the end he had to wait for about 20 months. At the time, the Health Minister was writing and advising local members that it would take only 32 weeks, but it has been in excess of that. This gentleman cannot wait much longer, nor can a lot of other Sunshine Coast residents.

Time expired.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 12.28 a.m. (Friday)