



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Convention Industry

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central— ALP) (Premier) (9.33 a.m.), by leave: My Government recognises the importance of the convention industry to Queensland tourism and the 125,000 Queenslanders employed in the industry. The industry is one of the most lucrative sectors of the tourism industry and contributes more than \$360m to the State's economy every year—and jobs with it. On average, international delegates to conventions spend about \$500 more on their visits than other tourists. And they are likely to be first-time visitors who are often so impressed by what they see that they return on holidays to inject more money into our economy.

That is why Cabinet has fast-tracked—on the advice of the Minister for Tourism, Bob Gibbs—a meeting incentive convention and exhibition grant scheme worth \$2m which is being made available to the State's six convention bureaus. The \$2m will enable the centres, in Cairns, Townsville, Whitsunday, the Sunshine Coast, the Gold Coast and Brisbane to expand their marketing and promotion drives on a worldwide basis. \$1m of that money has already been released and the other \$1m will be released in January by Minister Gibbs.

I am pleased to announce that in the past month Brisbane has won three more major conventions. During these conventions it is estimated that delegates are likely to spend nearly \$3m while they are in Queensland. They are three more reasons why building Brisbane's Convention and Exhibition Centre was such a worthwhile project. The conventions are: the World Multi-conference on Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics 1999, with an estimated 500 international delegates for four days, providing a total of 2,000 delegate days and estimated spending of \$1m; the Young Women's Christian Association 2000 with about 300 delegates in Brisbane for five days, providing 1,500 delegate days and spending of \$450,000; and the International Association of Logopaedics and Phoniatrics Congress 2004, with an estimated 1,000 delegates spending five days in Brisbane, giving 5,000 delegate days and spending estimated at \$1.5m.

That is why my Government will continue to drive the convention and exhibition sector of tourism to create jobs. I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition would fit in well with the last convention.
