



Speech by

Hon. HENRY PALASZCZUK

MEMBER FOR INALA

Hansard 27 October 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Job Creation in Rural and Regional Queensland

Hon. H. PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Primary Industries) (10.10 a.m.), by leave: The Beattie Government is driving job creation in rural and regional Queensland with a commitment and energy unmatched by any Government in the history of this State. This commitment and energy is delivering results. Queensland is reaping the rewards of the Government's campaign to advance our food and fibre to the world through the Government's investment in world-leading research, development and extension and through its commitment to value-adding and market development.

Agriculture is a vital economic contributor to Queensland. Our primary industries sector has endured many challenges and hardships this decade. These include a prolonged and severe drought. In other areas there have been instances of unseasonably high rainfall, cyclones or severe storms, the South-East Asian economic crisis, ever-fierce competition in established and prospective markets and, of course, depressed commodity prices. In Queensland, with the support of this Government, industries have been working to meet these challenges and to overcome these hardships.

I can announce today that Department of Primary Industries' analysis of Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows employment in Queensland's agricultural sector has increased by 23% between 1994-95 and 1998-99. These figures do not include nearly 10,000 people employed in fishing, forestry and logging, and agricultural service industries. The analysis shows that, during this period, agricultural employment in Queensland increased from a quarterly average of 75,900 people in 1994-95 to an average of 93,400 in 1998-99. The rate of increase in agricultural employment is more than double the increase for all Queensland industries during the same period.

Nationally, agricultural employment grew by only 3% during the same time. Queensland's rate of agricultural job growth is almost eight times greater than the national average. Queensland's grain and grazing industries together contributed 45,200 jobs in 1998-99, compared with 28,000 jobs in 1994-95. This was an increase of almost 62%. Other significant increases in agricultural employment included horticulture, up by 9% and growing; other crop growing by 10%; and agricultural service industries, up by 17%.
