



Speech by

Hon. P. BRADDY

MEMBER FOR KEDRON

Hansard 10 June 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
Breaking the Unemployment Cycle

Hon. P. J. BRADDY (Kedron—ALP) (Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations) (10.06 a.m.), by leave: Last year, the Beattie Government pledged its commitment to combating unemployment and giving young Queenslanders a real chance at securing a career. Today—still some weeks before the first anniversary of the Beattie Labor Government—I am delighted to announce that we are making real inroads into achieving our goal.

Since it was introduced in October last year, the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative has secured jobs or training for nearly 11,000 unemployed Queenslanders. These include jobs created in the public and private sector and by Government working with communities throughout the State. As at 31 May this year, the Beattie Government has granted \$12m to 106 community-based projects throughout the State. These projects alone have put 2,714 unemployed Queenslanders into jobs or training that has benefited themselves as well as their communities. Sixty-one of the projects were approved under the Community Jobs Plan, which funds major community and public projects to create work for long-term unemployed people for up to six months.

The other 45 projects were approved under the Community Employment Assistance Program, which helps long-term unemployed people or those at risk of experiencing long-term unemployment to develop new skills and more job opportunities. Projects approved for Community Jobs Plan funding include the Mary Valley Heritage Railway Museum Association's project to enhance the famous steam train journey from Gympie to Imbil. The association received in excess of \$223,000 to employ 19 people upgrading the track and restoring an engine and historic carriages. Ventures such as this give participants a new start in life. Everyone who takes part learns new work skills and most are expected to secure ongoing employment after the project.

Projects approved for funding under the Community Employment Assistance Program include the Schizophrenia Fellowship of South Queensland, which was granted almost \$60,000 to help 40 people with mental illness develop new skills and more employment opportunities. This is another example of the innovative work being done by local communities and the State Government throughout Queensland to stimulate local economies whilst helping long-term unemployed people secure jobs.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Queensland—particularly regional Queensland—for this tremendous effort which will result in more local jobs for the people who most need them. Queensland's commitment to job creation is also demonstrated by the readiness of private sector employers to take advantage of the Beattie Government's cash incentives. As at 4 June 1999, a total of 2,647 employers and group training schemes around the State were eligible for payments of up to \$2,000 for employing 5,154 apprentices and trainees in areas of skills shortage which are crucial to the Queensland economy. These employers are eligible for payments totalling \$5,635,000.

Government departments and agencies and local councils throughout Queensland have also supported the Beattie Government's initiative with a commitment to employing a total of 3,084 apprentices and trainees. It is a magnificent result. I thank Queensland communities for their efforts to date and I urge employers and community groups to continue to join with the Government in the battle against unemployment.