



Speech by

# Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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Hansard 15 September 1999

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### IBM Call Centre

**Hon. P. D. BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central— ALP) (Premier) (9.38 a.m.), by leave: IBM's decision to establish its Asia-Pacific help centre in Queensland is a major win for this State. IBM is the latest in a long line of companies setting up shop in our great State, and highlights our reputation as a strategic location for corporate Asian headquarters. Only recently, in the past week or so, the Deputy Premier and I attended the official opening and launch of this new centre.

More and more international businesses are taking advantage of our position as a stepping-off point to the Asia-Pacific region. IBM now joins Boeing and a string of other major corporates which have located regional headquarters here. Queensland's highly skilled, multilingual and multicultural society is a great asset in attracting investment to Queensland.

There is no doubt in my mind that this regional operations centre is a major step forward for Queensland. As honourable members are aware, my Government is committed to jobs, jobs, jobs and to developing Queensland into the Smart State. I believe that information technology is the key to achieving both. Information technology is already one of our fastest growing industries— worth around \$8 billion a year.

My Government wants to make sure that Queensland is at the forefront of this ever-growing industry. We want to foster pioneer industries that will lead to investment and jobs well into the next century. That is why we have developed a five-year strategy for communication and information industries in Queensland. This is the major strategy that the Minister for Communication and Information, Mr Mackenroth, launched recently. IBM's Asia Pacific Technical Support Centre fits into this strategy.

The company joins a long list of distinguished industry names here in Queensland. They include: Excell Global Services of the US who, in a joint venture with Telstra, have formed the Stellar Call Centre; the US company RSA—a world leader in encryption technology—which has chosen Queensland for its first overseas development centre; Indus International, which is relocating its Asia Pacific headquarters from Singapore to Brisbane; Saville—an IT company from Massachusetts—which has also picked Brisbane as the site of its Asia Pacific regional headquarters; Dascom, which has moved its Asia Pacific regional headquarters from Silicon Valley to the Gold Coast; and Boeing, which shifted its Australian corporate headquarters from Sydney to Brisbane, creating new opportunities for a range of service providers and service contractors in the IT and electronics industries. These companies have all recognised the benefits of doing business in Queensland. When it comes to business investment, Queensland's doors are well and truly open.

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