



Speech by

Hon. STEVE BREDHAUER

MEMBER FOR COOK

Hansard 25 November 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
Roads Implementation Program

Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER (Cook—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads) (9.55 a.m.), by leave: The Roads Implementation Program was launched following the Community Cabinet meeting in Kingaroy on 15 November and tabled in this Parliament on 16 November 1999. The 1999 Roads Implementation Program provides clear evidence of the fact that the Beattie Government is pushing ahead with its roads agenda and is committed to building Queensland's regions. This Roads Implementation Program builds on the Government's record achievement in roadworks delivery in 1998-99 where, overall, regional roadworks totalling \$1.158 billion were delivered. This reflects an increase in roadworks delivery of \$231m over the previous year.

This \$5.3 billion, five-year Roads Implementation Program provides a strong foundation for future economic growth throughout Queensland. It is a commitment by this Government and my Department of Main Roads to meet the demands of rapid population growth and industry expansion whilst also recognising that better roads contribute to improving the quality of life for all Queenslanders by providing access to basic services and bringing communities together. Importantly, this substantial program of works provides jobs and job security for 17,500 people in roads and related industries right across Queensland over the life of the program. On top of this is the \$111m Port Road funding package announced last Saturday. This joint State and Federal initiative will provide an extra 800 jobs over the two-year construction period, commencing in late 2000, and will result in many more jobs in the Gateway port precinct in the years ahead.

There is no doubt that Main Roads is central to the Government's capacity to deliver on its employment commitments, not just as a major employer in its own right but also through the jobs it generates and the training opportunities it provides in road construction and related industries, and in the broader community, by creating a more efficient road network. Irrespective of where people live in this State, the Roads Implementation Program delivers social equity, particularly to isolated communities that do not have the range of opportunities for jobs and secure long-term employment. Residents in these isolated communities will also benefit through safer travel and improved access to essential services.

Clearly, all Government election commitments in the roads area have been met, and all regions across the State will benefit over the five-year program. And in its continuing commitment to the bush, regional development and job creation, more than 50% of the allocated funds will be spent outside the south-east corner over the five-year period. After adjusting for the Pacific Motorway, which is a special initiative, and the \$23m of other roadworks advanced across the State during 1998-99, funds available from the State Budget to Main Roads for normal expenditure in 1999-2000 has increased by some \$40m, or 4%. This increases to \$107m when post-Budget funding adjustments are taken into account and provides for an overall regional roadworks program in 1999-2000 totalling \$1.06 billion.

The vast bulk of the five-year program comprises over \$4 billion in State-funded allocations for State roads programs, including in excess of \$200m in assistance to local governments for improvements to local roads under the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme. Federal funding over the period totals an estimated \$1 billion, including a minimum projected \$930m for the National Highway System, \$84m in Commonwealth assistance under Roads of National Importance and \$7m per annum for Federal road safety black spot initiatives.

Rural and regional Queensland will benefit from the ongoing allocation of \$30m per annum for the Rural and Regional Roads Improvement Program to assist with key road infrastructure needs supporting rural and regional development, population growth and industry development across the State. And in line with our election commitment to improved miscellaneous transport infrastructure, extra funding of \$17m has also been provided over four years for bikeways, targeted road safety improvements and minor road upgrades.

As in previous years, the Roads Implementation Program provides firm funding allocations for projects in the first two years, with indicative funding provided for candidate projects in the three years following. This will continue to allow local government and industry groups to plan ahead with certainty. This Government is determined to ensure that the roads program continues to stimulate regional development and jobs throughout the State. The Roads Implementation Program and the recent Port Road announcement are key examples of our success to date in this regard.
