



Speech by

Hon. STEVE BREDHAUER

MEMBER FOR COOK

Hansard 9 March 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Pacific Motorway

Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER (Cook—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads) (9.43 a.m.), by leave: This is a can-do Government focusing on jobs and job security. Through a series of major infrastructure projects we are improving Queensland's transport and roads and creating jobs, jobs, jobs: over 1,200 jobs in a \$240m upgrade of the rail line between Rockhampton and Townsville; 2,000 jobs on the South East Transit Project; between 400 and 500 construction jobs on the Brisbane light rail project with up to 80 jobs in the operational phase; 300 jobs on the Airtrain airport rail link; 300 jobs on the new diesel tilt train between Brisbane and Cairns; over 500 permanent jobs for fixed-term employees in Queensland Rail with a further 150 to come; and 17,500 jobs throughout the State over the life of the \$5.3 billion, five-year Roads Implementation Program.

But today I want to talk about the Pacific Motorway. Construction work on the motorway is at its peak and over 1,750 people are directly employed on the project. As well, around 4,000 others are indirectly employed in providing goods and services to Main Roads and contractors. Quite a number of these people live along the motorway, which means that the project is creating economic benefit for the areas that it passes through.

Construction along the Pacific Motorway from the Logan Motorway to Nerang is intensifying, with sections of the new motorway already in use. Many motorists do not realise it but they are driving on the new asphalt and concrete pavements in Beenleigh and around Pimpama, Coomera and Oxenford. The motorway is being built at around twice the speed of most road projects. This is made possible by having six contractors carrying out construction right along the 43 kilometre motorway and, of course, by the patience of south-east Queensland motorists.

The Pacific Motorway is setting new standards in construction, such as keeping two lanes open in each direction during daytime hours and maintaining a posted minimum speed of 80 kilometres per hour. Travel time between Logan and Nerang is monitored by vehicles that enter the traffic stream at set times each week. On average, the 43 kilometre trip takes only around five minutes longer now than it did a year ago when construction had just commenced. The number of accidents reported along the motorway actually decreased when construction started in 1998, compared with the previous year. Just as importantly, the time taken to clear vehicles after an incident has gone down from an average 75 minutes to around 45 minutes.

The majority of motorists have been extremely patient during construction and the cooperation of the driving public and local communities was especially evident during the Christmas/New Year holiday period. There was a significant reduction in accidents along the motorway in December and January. We are hoping for a similar response as the Easter holiday period draws near.

As occurred over the Christmas period, most construction work will stop over Easter. However, the lack of construction will not mean that motorists should become complacent. Although the road is starting to open up more, with road shoulders rather than the constraints of concrete barriers, the alignment is changing week by week as new sections open and old off-ramps close. It is important to remember, too, that many holidaymakers will not have driven the road for some time and will need to pay extra attention to the new arrangements.

The motorway is on target to be opened to traffic in March next year. Recent wet weather is not expected to adversely affect this date. At the end of January, almost 20% of the motorway pavement

had been laid or was under construction. Of the 90 bridges and major culverts, 36 were complete and work had commenced on another 34. The Pacific Motorway project includes construction of 46 kilometres of service roads and 29 kilometres of that total have already been built.

The Pacific Motorway is another example of this Government getting on with the job and delivering—delivering on transport infrastructure, delivering on jobs and delivering on job security.
