



Speech by

Hon. T. McGRADY

MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA

Hansard 2 March 2000

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

North-west Queensland Development Initiative

Hon. T. McGRADY (Mount Isa—ALP) (Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister Assisting the Deputy Premier on Regional Development) (9.43 a.m.), by leave: I wish to inform the House of the progress of the north-west Queensland development initiative. As I have mentioned before in the House, in April last year I announced chapter 2 of the Carpentaria/Mount Isa mineral province.

In 1992, industry and Government came together to form the original Carpentaria/Mount Isa study group. This was a rare experience for Queensland and Australia: rival companies and Governments at all levels getting together to resolve common problems. All told, some 2,000 new permanent jobs were directly created and a further 6,000 to 8,000 jobs in other industries arose through multiplier effects.

Significant improvements to infrastructure have been carried out, and the major projects have begun operations or are close to doing so. The next step in the development process is called "the north-west Queensland development initiative". This initiative has a broader perspective than its predecessor. This new study group comprises representatives of Government, industry and the north-west Queensland community. I believe the second stage study could result in major investment and job creation on the same scale as the first stage.

I am pleased to advise the House that I recently chaired the second meeting of the principal group. At this meeting, the progress of the individual issues groups was discussed. Without going into too much detail, I can advise that some very exciting work is being done. The business enterprise development group is examining the possibility of developing a conference centre/country club at Lake Moondarra. The agribusiness group is working with the Bynoe Corporation to provide stock holding areas near the port of Karumba. The tourism group is identifying the opportunities and impediments to tourism growth in the region.

These three examples highlight the excellent work that all seven of the issues groups are doing. As well, the north-west development initiative will be represented at the mining expo held in Mount Isa in April. This will build on the successful community information session that was held in north-west Queensland last October. The representation at the mining expo will further inform the people of the north-west of the progress of the study and also advise of opportunities and enable them to have input in the initiative.

I believe the people of the north-west have a lot to offer, and I feel this latest information opportunity will give them further ownership of the initiative. The Government has provided resources for this initiative, but it is also asking for assistance from relevant stakeholders who comprise the different groups. The Government has created this initiative, and it is now up to the principals team, the management team and the issue groups to keep the momentum rolling and to ensure this initiative is as successful as the first stage study. I am very pleased to be able to say that all parties are holding up their end of the bargain to ensure the success of this initiative. I would like to thank the participants for their involvement and encourage them to keep up the hard work.
