



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard 9 August 2001

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Burdekin Catchment, Rehabilitation Project; Australian Magnesium Corporation

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.44 a.m.), by leave: I would like to pass on some good news about our precious coastal resources in the Great Barrier Reef. The government is developing a reef protection plan that will contain actions to improve our protection of the reef. The plan was one of our key election commitments, and I am happy to say that we are delivering it. I thank the Minister for Environment for his support in developing it on behalf of the government.

As part of the plan, a reef protection task force is being formed to provide advice to the government. The task force will meet next week, that is Thursday, 16 August, and will include high level representatives from the state government, Commonwealth and local governments, and agriculture, tourism, fishing, conservation and other interests. They will be organised by the Minister for Primary Industries.

Through the reef protection plan, the government will build on the strong commitment of Queensland communities, farmers and industries to protect the Great Barrier Reef. Considerable efforts are already being made, but we know that we have to do a lot more to safeguard the reef from sediment, fertiliser and pollutants running off the land. The Burdekin rehabilitation project will not only help protect the reef, it will provide training and jobs for about 20 people in the Ayr district. It will also help internationally recognised wetlands. I know that the local member, the member for Burdekin, will be very supportive of that.

The Environmental Protection Agency, through the work of my colleague the honourable Minister for Environment, has organised this project, which has the endorsement of the member for Burdekin. The project will actively involve the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, the Department of Primary Industries, the Burdekin Shire Council, Canegrowers, Greening Australia and the local community through the Burdekin-Bowen Integrated Floodplain Management Advisory Committee.

The rehabilitation project involves bank stabilisation, aquatic weed removal and the planting of 100,000 trees in the Burdekin region during the next 12 months. This is exactly the type of project that demonstrates what my government is about—results that make a difference. The project is also integrated with the National Action Plan on Salinity and Water Quality, and complements the reef task force and the reef protection plan. As I said at the beginning of my ministerial statements, this is a great day for Queensland. The AMC project is going to provide not just jobs, but smart jobs for a Smart State.
