



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard 13 December 2001

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Visit to New Zealand by Premier and Tourism Minister

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.33 a.m.), by leave: Next week the Tourism Minister, Merri Rose, and I will be visiting New Zealand to promote Queensland's tourism industry. During our two day visit I will have talks with the New Zealand Prime Minister, Helen Clark, and a number of her government's key trade and industry ministers. I am looking forward to meeting Dr Clark again. I appreciate her personal initiative in arranging for our trip to take place at this time and am confident it will benefit New Zealand and, of course, Queensland.

While the main focus of the visit will be on tourism and biotechnology opportunities, we will also canvass general trade issues. Ms Rose and I will leave Brisbane at midnight on Monday after the major cabinet reception here at Parliament House and fly directly to Wellington, arriving on Tuesday morning, 18 December. Our talks with Dr Clark and her government ministers will be held in Wellington on Tuesday, and on Wednesday morning we travel to Brisbane's sister city of Auckland for direct talks with representatives of the New Zealand tourism and travel industry.

New Zealand is one of Australia's key international markets for tourism. My visit will be supported by a small advertising campaign worth about \$15,000—this has not been finalised yet—with advertisements placed in the *Dominion* newspaper in Wellington and the *New Zealand Herald* in Auckland. More than 265,000 New Zealanders holidayed in Queensland last financial year. That represents about 13 per cent of our international tourism market—second only to Japan in total numbers.

The Queensland government is totally focused on continuing to build long-term, sustainable partnerships with the New Zealand travel industry. During the past six months we have seen a reduction in air capacity across the Tasman following the collapse of Ansett and both Qantas and Air New Zealand significantly reducing capacity. We hope that is only temporary. Encouragingly, Freedom Air has increased its operations to south-east Queensland, with the Department of State Development and the minister, Tom Barton, providing some assistance to get Freedom Air flights into the Gold Coast. Also encouraging is the news this week that Qantas is basing its new international low-cost carrier, Australian Airlines, in Cairns, although there are no flights scheduled to New Zealand at this stage.

Queensland has a long and close association with New Zealand. Over the years many New Zealanders have chosen to make Queensland their home. So there are close family ties that link us together. We share a common interest in sport, particularly cricket and the Rugby codes. I will be joined by Stuart Booker, the Deputy Director-General of State Development, and tourism leaders will also be joining us.
