



Speech by

**Hon. STEVE BREDHAUER**

**MEMBER FOR COOK**

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Hansard 1 May 2001

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**South East Busway**

**Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER** (Cook—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads) (9.52 a.m.), by leave: On the weekend past, the Premier and I officially commissioned the state government's new \$350 million South East Busway. Regular services commenced yesterday and early reports are encouraging. Commuters across southern Brisbane have embraced the busway as a fast, efficient, safe and reliable means of public transport.

Four days of busway fun days staged over the weekend gave the people of south-east Queensland the chance to preview their new busway. A series of fun, family-friendly events along the South East Busway corridor were sponsored by the private sector. It was a fun way for people to learn how to use the busway and it further demonstrates the level of private sector support for this state government-funded project. On Saturday, 28 April the free community events ranged from a mini Greek festival at the cultural centre to an 'east meets west' Asian festival at Eight Mile Plains. Brisbane Transport also ran the 111 service free of charge, allowing people to experience the busway.

The fun days were a fitting way to showcase the state government's \$350 million South East Busway as part of the overall \$599 million South East Transit Project. The state government has provided the people of south-east Queensland with the first link in a busway network that is clearly the best of its kind in the world. The South East Busway is a substantial engineering achievement, and the state government is immensely proud of the achievements of the design and construction industry.

I would like to acknowledge the excellent work carried out by the South East Transit Project team, which included officers from Queensland Transport and the Department of Main Roads. In particular, Bruce Wilson, Les Ford, Don Steele and Barry Gyte and their hardworking team have done an outstanding job in planning and overseeing construction and operation of this critical piece of regional infrastructure. I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of the private sector, including consultants and contractors who assisted in planning and then building the busway.

The busway is the first of a new generation of smarter public transport projects for Queensland, providing people with a high-frequency, reliable and accessible public transport system. The South East Busway is the biggest public transport project undertaken by the Queensland government in recent years. The state government has drawn on some of the best technological advances in the world to create a busway that strongly reflects our image as a Smart State. Being a Smart State is about promoting innovation, and this government is committed to providing innovative transport choices for Queenslanders.

Innovation in public transport involves planning and partnerships. The South East Busway is attracting worldwide attention as a public transport solution to future travel demands. It represents the innovations Queensland is putting in place to truly become the Smart State. The Beattie government is planning for the future. We are conducting a major public transport study in Cairns, we are canvassing rail options for the Gold Coast and we recently identified a major public transport corridor for the Sunshine Coast. We are continuing to increase rail safety and are reforming the taxi, ferry and bus industries with new contracts and better services.

Years of careful planning and consultation have gone into the South East Busway. It has created tremendous employment opportunities—more than 7,000 jobs during the construction of the busway. Environmental issues such as air and water quality, noise and vibration, regeneration and

erosion were addressed during the construction process. We relocated trees, sponsored education and tree-planting sessions with schoolchildren, and undertook archaeological investigations to preserve our cultural heritage. It is tangible evidence of the state government's commitment to continue to provide infrastructure that makes using public transport easier while at the same time being sensitive to the environment and communities.

People can now experience a style of public transport never before seen in south-east Queensland. The busway will significantly reduce travel time for Brisbane's south side residents by up to two-thirds during peak hour. Travelling from Eight Mile Plains to the city in peak hour can take up to an hour. On a bus travelling along the new busway, the journey will now take 18 minutes. It will now be easier for passengers to link with other bus and rail services.

The busway has been designed as the start of a more integrated public transport system for Brisbane and south-east Queensland. We have created sophisticated infrastructure to significantly improve public transport in the region and create a cleaner environment for the future.

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