



Speech by
Dr DAVID WATSON
MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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APPROPRIATION BILLS—ESTIMATES COMMITTEE F

Dr WATSON (Moggill—Lib) (4.34 p.m.): The portfolio of Innovation and Information Economy is contained within the Department of Innovation and Information Economy, Sport and Recreation. I think it is worth considering exactly how important this portfolio is when we compare its proportion of funding to the rest of the department, and that of course is on page 10 of the MPS. The portfolio of Information Economy and Innovation is meant to be the driving force of the Smart State rhetoric or Smart State strategy in Queensland. When we look at its importance in terms of getting money from the consolidated fund, if we look at the output revenue we will see that Sport actually gets approximately \$126 million whereas Innovation and Information Economy gets about \$51 million in terms of infrastructure facilities and services, and the policy and regulatory framework gets about another \$17 million for a total of \$68 million to \$69 million. In other words, Sport in this department gets twice as much as Information Economy and Innovation. If one looks at the output statement on page 10 of the MPS, one has to reach the conclusion that we really are the 'Smart Sport State' rather than the Smart State, or perhaps the 'Half Smart State'.

It was this observation in any case that led me to ask the question of the minister during the estimates: what exactly was the strategy that the government was following and, most importantly, how are the numbers being bandied around by the government actually articulated not only in terms of the amounts but also by year and by program? If we look at what the government says, it argues in one press release that \$270 million has been spent on the bioindustry strategy and in another that \$1.5 billion has been spent since 1998 on scientific research, infrastructure and things like that. If one looks at the document brought down yesterday, *Queensland the Smart State—investing in science: Research, education and innovation*, that \$1.5 billion has grown to \$2 billion. But nowhere can one find a statement which gives by year and by program the amount of money that is actually being spent by this government in each of these areas. One cannot help wondering whether or not rhetoric is simply all there is to the Smart State strategy.

There are of course some programs, which I admit, but whether or not this is a significant input is open to question. Let me just say this: the Premier noted that I had asked this question in the estimates committee and said that the document brought down yesterday was the answer. Let me point out a few things, because I have looked at it. If one looks at pages 10 and 11, which look at the Smart State success, a couple of things really stand out. I want to talk about them in the brief time available to me. One was, for example, establishing 32 new cooperative research centres with links to Queensland that are driving innovation in particular areas. The other one is that part of the \$100 million funding will advance new research centres including one on e-health and one on e-security. What this document, the minister and the Premier constantly fail to acknowledge is that these things are basically driven by the federal government.

Mr Lucas: Rubbish.

Dr WATSON: If one looks at the press releases put out by the federal Minister for Science in December of last year, for example, there was \$478 million funding from the federal government going into CRCs, and one of them was the \$17.5 million which went into the biosecurity. Yet when we were in Washington this minister put out a press release which indicated that he was putting in \$4 million, and not once during that press release did he indicate that the Commonwealth had actually announced this

in December the previous year. It had not only announced it but put in four times the amount this government was putting into it. When we look at the detail, we do not see the detail being matched with the rhetoric. What I ask the minister to do is for once put down in one document every program by year and the dollars assigned to each program and then we might believe that the rhetoric is matched by the reality.

Time expired.