



Speech by

Hon. Paul Lucas

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

Hansard Wednesday, 24 November 2004

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Roads Implementation Program

Hon. P.T. LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.07 a.m.): The recent Queensland infrastructure report card from Engineers Australia noted that Queensland controlled roads were better than Australian state controlled roads generally. It also said that Queensland had consistently invested a larger share of gross state product on roads than any other state of Australia—more than New South Wales, Victoria or Western Australia. The *Courier-Mail's* Roads Solution Report, which I endorse to members as quite a good read, recorded that in 2001 Queensland spent nearly double the money on state controlled roads than Victoria did—\$830 million versus \$431 million—despite having a significantly smaller population.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr LUCAS: The members opposite should just listen. Per capita in 2001, Queensland spent 2.5 times more than Victoria did and one-third more than New South Wales did. Nonetheless, no-one disputes that we have to build more and better roads in Queensland. Our tearaway population growth means that we have to work hard to ensure that our roads can keep up with the ballooning demand.

That is why I am delighted to inform the House of our record of records, five-year funding under Main Roads' recently released Roads Implementation Program, or RIP. From 2004-05 to 2008-09, we are injecting an unprecedented \$8 billion into roadworks. That is a massive \$2.1 billion—or 36 per cent—funding increase on last year's RIP for safer, new and better Queensland roads. It includes 673 new road projects over the next two years alone; a record total of 22,600 jobs, including 5,100 new jobs and 17,500 continuing jobs for Queenslanders; \$1.7 billion extra, or an 87 per cent funding increase, for south-east Queensland in line with needs identified in the draft SEQ Regional Plan—and we have not even seen the infrastructure plan yet, which will come out next year with even bigger and better undertakings; and a big increase for rural and regional Queensland of some \$430 million over the five years.

Prominent new funding under RIP includes \$5 million for major traffic studies for the proposed western bypass of Brisbane. A further sign of our commitment to planning for growth is a \$300 million allocation to upgrade sections of the Pacific Motorway between Tugun and the Gateway Motorway and requiring the federal government to match those funds. Other prominent projects funded in the RIP include the Tugun Bypass, the Springfield to Ripley road, the four-laning of the Sunshine Motorway, the Yeppoon bypass, the Stuart bypass at Townsville and the Flinders Highway between Torrens Creek and Cloncurry.

Dr Flegg: What about Moggill Road?

Mr LUCAS: The honourable member cannot have read the RIP, because if he had he would clearly understand that it is funded and will be completed when indicated, as per what the government said.

Dr Flegg: It has been there since 1977!

Mr LUCAS: We do not want to talk about you—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! We will not enter into a debate. Minister, will you continue with your statement.

Mr LUCAS: We do not want to talk about the member and Crikey and media releases, and the member for Caloundra and Crikey—the tick-and-flick Liberal Party roads media release: depending on where you live, just insert the variables. That is what the Liberal Party got caught out with. We thought the Nationals were lazy, but the Liberal Party is worse.

The RIP consists of \$6.3 billion in state funding and \$1.67 billion from the Commonwealth for roads on the national transport network and for black spots. I will actually be meeting the federal roads minister again on Friday. I spoke with him and the federal transport minister last week and the week before that. We will cooperate with the Commonwealth government on this. We recognise the money it is giving us. We need more, and we will work cooperatively to get more. I have spoken with a number of members of the opposition about that, including the members for Toowoomba South and Gregory.

Queensland's extra \$1.1 billion includes \$301 million announced in the state budget to meet election commitments and \$571 million from the arterial roads infrastructure package. Queensland is in road building overdrive. We are getting stuck into building new roads and upgrading and maintaining our existing roads. Record numbers of graders and bitumen laying machines will get on with the job of providing smart roads solutions for the Smart State. This year's RIP provides a huge shot in the arm for roadworks in Queensland. Even Engineers Australia should concede that we are rolling up our sleeves and getting on with the job.