



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard 21 April 2004

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Community Cabinet, Townsville-Thuringowa

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.56 a.m.): I am delighted to report to the parliament on the Townsville community cabinet. The people of Townsville and north Queensland are great supporters of participatory democracy. They proved as much with their overwhelming response to the first regional parliament in 2002. They proved it all over again at the weekend when in Townsville we held our 70th community cabinet. This was the third such meeting in Townsville since 1998.

Combining the three events, ministers, senior public servants and I have now met with almost 500 formal deputations in Townsville. While we initially expected 168 prebooked formal deputations on Sunday, I am advised that the number climbed to about 170 on the day. This placed it in the top five of 70 community cabinet meetings in terms of formal deputations. I took some incisive questions from the floor. There were scores of informal deputations.

This is the sort of enthusiasm that makes democracy tick and helps keep our government's feet firmly on the ground. I thank the people of north Queensland and the many volunteers who made the two-day gathering a success, and I thank the local media for alerting their readers, listeners and viewers to the event. It was with pleasure that I joined with my parliamentary secretary for north Queensland, Lindy Nelson-Carr, the member for Thuringowa, Craig Wallace, and of course the local minister, Mike Reynolds, and all ministers to deliver a clutch of important announcements for the region. I seek leave to have those announcements incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

- A proposed \$145 million CBD residential development for QR North Yard. Honeycombes Investment Group signed a heads of agreement giving 90 day exclusive dealing over the site to undertake further investigations.
- \$4.5 million for the Thuringowa Riverway Project.
- Granting a technical consultancy as part of investigations of the viability of a world-class cruise ship and military vessel facility.
- Turning a sod for an immediate start to construction of a new \$13.6 million aged care centre at Kirwan.
- Revealing Ergon Energy will spend an extra \$17 million in preventive maintenance to boost reliability and safety of electricity supply to regional Queensland (with North Queensland receiving an extra \$3—\$4 million)
- Starting the \$17.6 million Round 5 of Cooler Schools, to complete air-conditioning of up to 560 classrooms (including up to 117 in Townsville and surrounds).
- Appointing Queensland's top public servant, Dr Leo Keliher, to co-ordinate and oversee the government's response to public drunkenness in Townsville.
- Giving a group of Indigenous youngsters from Shalom College the good news that 11 students will be part of a business mentoring program with the help of a government sponsorship.
- Signing off on the delivery of \$500,000 to improve facilities at Happy Valley.
- Announcing plans for a new \$3.6 million Ingham police station.
- Granting \$30 000 to Volunteering Townsville/Thuringowa to help young people develop a peer information network.
- A \$64,000 boost to mental health services in the region.
- \$34,000 towards the cost of lighting up Thuringowa City Council's parks and gardens.