



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard 21 April 2004

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Aviation Industry

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.57 a.m.): There are a number of matters I want to refer to as part of my report on my recent overseas trip. Before I do that, I want to talk about the snowballing in one of the state's developing industries, that is, aviation. My overseas trip interfaces with this series of developments.

The aviation industry is beginning to build and build. Our aviation advances truly are—pardon the expression—taking off. Earlier this month I inspected our latest acquisition at Aviation Australia at the Brisbane airport. Its \$250,000 purchase of a Fokker F28 jetliner means that the momentum in Queensland's burgeoning aerospace industry is hastening. I thank the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations for the initiatives which are taking place out there. Tom Barton knows that the Fokker F28 from Air Niugini means Aviation Australia is now the nation's only specialised training provider, offering students hands-on, real world experience in a functioning commercial jetliner.

My government established Aviation Australia in 2001 to support the development and growth of the aviation and aerospace industries in Queensland within our geographic region. In Queensland alone we have seen this industry sector expand by over 4,200 jobs since 1998. What is more, there is an achievable expectation that this growth rate is sustainable.

Secondly, a \$2 billion aircraft contract with links to Brisbane was announced last week, with Qantas joining with European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company, EADS, to become the preferred tenderer on a defence contract. Coincidentally, I met with EADS officials in Marseilles while on my latest trade mission earlier this month. I was there to reinforce our strengths and the benefits for them in choosing the Smart State.

Qantas Defence Services and the military transport division of EADS have been chosen to provide the RAAF's fleet of new air-to-air refuelling aircraft. EADS' A330 multirole tanker transport aircraft will replace the RAAF's ageing Boeing 707 aircraft. There will be five A330 aircraft. Basic aircraft construction will be carried out in Europe while Qantas will install and integrate refuelling modifications for four of the five craft right here in Brisbane if they are successful.

Thirdly, while in Vienna this month I detailed how my government has attracted another world-class aviation company to establish its Australian regional headquarters in Queensland. That is Frequentis. Frequentis maintains and develops communication and information systems for air traffic control management and public safety and transport and employs 560 people worldwide. I announced the Frequentis decision in Vienna during that recent trade mission and I am pleased to inform the parliament today of what it means for this state. I seek leave to have the remainder of my ministerial statement incorporated in *Hansard*

Leave granted.

My Government's Trade and Investment Office in London and the Department of State Development and Innovation have been involved in negotiations with executives at the Vienna headquarters of Frequentis.

They demonstrated the advantages of Queensland, including the support of my pro-business Government, low taxes, low set-up and operating costs, skilled workers, excellent training, educational infrastructure and the aviation hub that already exists.

No incentives were used to persuade the company to come to Queensland.

The Frequentis regional headquarters will create a significant number of new jobs in Brisbane as the company grows, with the majority of them being highly skilled.

Frequentis adds to the critical mass of aviation companies here and makes Queensland even more attractive to other aviation companies.

I expect to be making yet another major aviation announcement later in the week.

Since 1998 jobs created in the Queensland aerospace industry include:

- Virgin Blue headquarters, engineering and training facilities (about 2000 jobs)
- Qantas 767 Maintenance Facility (680 jobs),
- EADS Australian Aerospace Headquarters (100 jobs),
- Australian Airlines Operational Hub (300 jobs),
- National Jet Systems Maintenance Facility (70 jobs),
- Singapore Airlines Lear Jet Training Facility (15 jobs),
- Raytheon Logistics Centre of Excellence (67 jobs),
- Hawker Pacific Maintenance Facility (50 jobs),
- Boeing Regional Headquarters (800 jobs),
- Virgin Blue/Flight Safety Boeing Training International (50 jobs),
- Smith Aerospace Headquarters (55 jobs),
- Qantas Snapfresh Facility (230 jobs).

Aviation Australia now has 132 full-time Aeroskills students enrolled for 10-month courses in the three principal training areas of aviation structures, aviation mechanics and aviation electronics.

During its first full two years of operation (2002, 2003) it had graduated a total of 155 students, more than 95 per cent of whom had achieved employment within the aviation or aerospace industry.

That is a fantastic take-up.

Aviation Australia graduates are now employed with Qantas, as well as with aerospace industry companies such as Boeing, and Pratt and Whitney.

It is currently training some 20 engineering staff from Cathay Pacific, Dragonair, Air Niugini and Air Korea, who will return to their jobs in China, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, Thailand and Hong Kong.

Aviation Australia now has onsite a Boeing 737 cabin simulator, a Boeing 767 emergency exit chute trainer, and Boeing 737, 767 and Airbus A320 door and exit trainers.

During calendar 2003, Aviation Australia trained over 1000 people through 'short courses' in fields such as Aviation management training; Aviation risk and safety, and Advanced aircraft engineering. (All Australian students)

Aviation Australia has also been chosen as the training provider to run the new Cairns Aviation Skills Centre on behalf of the local \$120 million industry in Far North Queensland.

Aviation Australia is currently negotiating a number of training proposals with airlines and agencies in China and the Persian Gulf.