



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Thursday, 9 March 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

PNG-Queensland Gas Pipeline

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.52 am): The Papua New Guinea to Queensland gas pipeline is a vital piece of infrastructure for our state. It is a key part of my government's plans to ensure that our energy needs are met for many years to come. It will give our industries security and drive job creation across Queensland. The construction of the \$3 billion gas pipeline to connect PNG to the Queensland gas pipeline is expected to add around \$620 million to Australia's gross domestic product during construction. The 2½ year construction phase will generate more than 1,000 jobs in regional Queensland.

Mr Wallace: Hear, hear!

Mr BEATTIE: I know that Thuringowa will be one of the areas benefiting. Today I can announce another important step in the construction of this massive project. The Coordinator-General has declared the Gove lateral project a significant project under section 27 of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971. The 670 kilometre Gove lateral will connect the PNG-Queensland gas pipeline—the main line—east of Weipa to Gove in the Northern Territory. Once completed the pipeline will deliver natural gas from PNG to the Alcan alumina refinery in Gove. In addition, a 30 kilometre long gas supply pipeline is proposed from the Gove lateral to Weipa. A public environmental impact statement—EIS—process will now begin, as required under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971. It is estimated that the Gove lateral is worth around half a billion dollars and will create up to 200 jobs during its 2½ year construction phase.

The Coordinator-General's decision is an important one. The construction of this lateral pipeline is integral to the economic viability of the PNG gas project, which will in turn enable a major supply of natural gas to service the growing eastern Australian market. It is more evidence of my government's commitment to creating jobs and inviting investment in Queensland.

Today's announcement of the Coordinator-General's decision follows an earlier decision to declare the proposed \$1 billion Ballera pipeline link a significant project. The Queensland government has actively supported the pipeline between Queensland and Papua New Guinea—it was included in our energy policy released in May 2000. The PNG to Queensland pipeline promises to create healthy gas competition—something we have been strongly committed to, as you know, Mr Speaker, in your previous roles—and a ready supply of gas for Queensland's mining, manufacturing, energy and industrial sectors.