



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Thursday, 9 March 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Professional Skills Shortages

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.55 am): Yesterday, along with Tom Barton, the minister for employment and training, I announced my government's blueprint for skilling our workforce—the *Queensland Skills Plan* white paper. It detailed the government's comprehensive strategy to ensure that our vocational and training sector meets the needs of the growing Queensland economy.

Today, I am pleased to announce the establishment of a dedicated team in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to tackle a different skills need. The team will identify and address critical professional skill vacancies which, when they are filled, will also contribute to the growth of our economy and the delivery of government services. The new recruitment team will work with industry and across government. It will identify professional skills shortages, and develop strategies and alliances to solve them. Primary responsibility for recruitment will still be with individual government agencies and private sector organisations. The new recruitment team will get involved when there are chronic professional skills shortages, and the agencies and private sector organisations are unable to fill the positions.

Queensland is being more aggressively marketed as a destination for skilled employees interstate and internationally. That is what this means. The new recruitment team will work with Education Queensland, the Department of Employment and Training, and Queensland universities to develop initiatives to increase student awareness and interest in entering professions where skill shortages exist. Strategic direction to the team will be provided by a new Chief Executive Officers Steering Committee. It will be chaired by the Coordinator-General and the Director-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Ross Rolfe. This initiative will ensure the best match between Queensland's supply of professional skills and the needs of industry and the public sector.