



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 29 March 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Commonwealth Games, Queensland Athletes

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.51 am): Later today there will be a parade through the city CBD to give Queenslanders the opportunity to welcome home the members of our Commonwealth Games team as well as Queensland based members of the Australian Winter Olympics team who recently competed at Torino in Italy. Following the parade I will also be hosting a reception here at Parliament House together with Lord Mayor Campbell Newman to congratulate them on behalf of the people of Queensland, and all members of parliament are invited to attend.

After the events of the last few weeks, I think we might have to offer Queensland motorists an extra choice in numberplates. Instead of giving them the choice of 'Sunshine State' or 'Smart State' we might have to offer a third option: 'Sports State'. Once again, Queensland has punched well above its weight in an international sporting event. At the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne Queenslanders made up 24 per cent of the Australian team yet Queenslanders won 45 per cent of Australia's gold medals and 37 per cent of our medals overall. That is an incredible performance. I seek leave to have the remainder of my ministerial statement incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

That is an incredible performance. Not only are the team members an inspiration to all Queenslanders, but they're also wonderful role models.

In an age of increasing obesity where one in four Queensland kids is considered obese, we desperately need these sorts of role models to inspire young Queenslanders to be active and healthy and to aim for excellence.

The Queensland Government is proud to support our elite athletes through the Queensland Academy of Sport.

More than half our team from Melbourne are currently scholarship holders with the QAS.

At the QAS they receive expert coaching and financial assistance as well as access to cutting-edge sport science and career guidance.

Now the long term focus for many athletes will turn to Beijing.

The Queensland Government will once again be right behind our athletes as they prepare for the Olympic Games, which are now just 863 days away.

At the Athens Olympics two years ago, Queenslanders comprised 19 per cent of the team but won 33 per cent of the medals.

At the Beijing Olympics, the goal of the Queensland Olympic Council is for Queenslanders to comprise 20 per cent of the team and win 36 per cent of the medals.

As our athletes continue to do Queensland proud on the international stage, it's clear that our investment is paying off.

I congratulate those who represented us both in Torino at the Winter Olympics, and in Melbourne, and I know all Members join me in wishing them every success for the future.