



Speech by

**Hon. PETER BEATTIE**

**MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL**

Hansard Friday, 26 May 2006

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Berwyndale South Coal Seam Gas Project

**Hon. PD BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (8.35 am): After question time this morning I will be heading out west to officially open a new project which is a wonderful example of smart thinking in the Smart State. The Berwyndale South Coal Seam Gas Project out near Miles has been developed by the Queensland Gas Co. and its partner, Sentient Gas Australia. When I became Premier almost exactly eight years ago, the use of coal seam gas as a significant energy source was a dream. Then what happened? We brought in our energy policy.

**Mr Mickel:** Who opposed that?

**Mr BEATTIE:** And opposed by the opposition. That energy policy has led to the development of a whole new industry—coal seam methane. If it were not for the Smart State Strategy, coal seam methane would not have been developed as an industry as it is today. That is what the Smart State is all about. That is what we have delivered. I say to the people of Miles, who are represented by a National Party member, that this would not be happening if it were not for good Labor Party policy.

There were technical issues that seemed almost insurmountable and production was limited to two petajoules a year. Listen to this.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BEATTIE:** They do not like this, do they? There were technical issues—this is about coal seam methane—that seemed almost insurmountable and production was limited to two petajoules a year. However, in eight short years, the coal seam gas industry in Queensland has emerged as a very important contributor to our energy supplies and it is highly likely to become more and more important as time goes by. Many technical issues have been overcome and—listen to this—last year production reached 45 petajoules. That is the Smart State Strategy. Queensland's total gas consumption in 2005 was 110 petajoules, so coal seam gas accounted for more than 40 per cent.

**Mr Mickel** interjected.

**Mr BEATTIE:** That is right, we do. I take that interjection. At 30 June last year, proven and probable recoverable reserves of coal seam gas in Queensland amounted to more than 2,800 petajoules, and some industry sources say the figure could rise to more than 25,000 petajoules. It is a fantastic success story on the back of our energy policy.

I remember the whingers. They all whinged about it. Everybody whinged about it. We delivered and there are the results.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BEATTIE:** You see, Mr Speaker, they whinge and we work. I want to be really clear about this. There is no doubt in my mind that there is one thing on which this government will never be better than the opposition, and that is whingeing. I am happy to let the opposition have the gold medal for whingeing.

This is a fantastic success story. For Queensland it has meant the opening up of a whole new energy source, massive investment in gas fields, pipelines, power stations and industrial application and jobs. We lead Australia in the development and growth of this new energy industry, and my government has encouraged and supported that growth.

We fund research and geological surveys that will help identify additional resources, and we passed the first legislation in Australia that implemented a comprehensive coal seam gas regime. This legislation provides clear rules, rights and obligations for the coalmining and coal seam gas industries to work cooperatively to ensure Queenslanders derive the optimum benefit from these resources.

The first stage of Berwyndale South has created 16 permanent jobs. A further four jobs will be created when the second stage begins operating in October. The construction workforce peaked at 100.

Fifty million dollars has been spent developing the first stage of the project. The second stage will cost an additional \$30 million. Production will then double to 8 petajoules a year. Gas from the first stage will provide fuel for CS Energy's Swanbank E Power Station. Output from the second stage will go to the same generator's Braemer Power Station.

I congratulate everyone involved in bringing this project to fruition, including the minister. I look forward to the further strong growth of this industry in Queensland.