



Speech by

# Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Tuesday, 6 June 2006

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Blueprint for the Bush

**Hon. PD BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.40 am): Last week I travelled to Charleville with three of my key ministers to launch a 10-year blueprint to help support growth and development in rural and regional Queensland. Blueprint for the Bush has been developed in collaboration with one of the state's peak agricultural bodies, AgForce Queensland, and the Local Government Association of Queensland. The Blueprint for the Bush and the related Rural Economic Development and Infrastructure Plan provide the building blocks for continued prosperity for current and future generations of rural Queenslanders. I table copies of both documents for the record. Copies will be distributed to all members.

These documents map out approximately \$36 billion of public and private investment already being undertaken or under active consideration in Queensland to sustain and grow rural communities. They include \$10 billion in energy infrastructure, \$3 billion in regional and rural roads, \$2.5 billion in rail infrastructure, rolling stock and ports and \$900 million for social and community infrastructure. In addition, there is \$990 million of new water projects under consideration to provide approximately 1.235 million megalitres of extra storage capacity and help address the vital issue of water security and supply. These allocations include and will be supplemented with billions of dollars in infrastructure and capital works to be unveiled in today's state budget.

In addition to the range of building and infrastructure projects, another \$153.4 million for specific new Blueprint for the Bush initiatives has also been included. For example, they include \$47 million for natural resource management projects, including vegetation management, pest eradication and environmental preservation. In addition, there is \$30 million for a strengthening communities program which will have two components: \$15 million to provide grants for councils and community organisations to support community building projects, promote rural image and improve community access within rural towns through improved community buses; and \$15 million for community organisations to improve service delivery, particularly in rural mental health services, build links across community organisations and increase the viability and effectiveness of rural Indigenous community organisations.

Blueprint for the Bush is the result of extensive consultation undertaken with rural communities and rural Queenslanders. I thank Warren Pitt, the minister who conducted this, and Henry Palaszczuk and Tim Mulherin, with the support of other ministers and departmental representatives. I also acknowledge the role of Kerry Shine, the parliamentary secretary, who has had a significant influence.

There were two phases of community engagement undertaken in 2005, culminating in a Blueprint for the Bush symposium held in Toowoomba on 11 and 12 November 2005. A discussion paper was released and between July and November 2005, 565 people replied to a questionnaire available in hard copy and online, 105 formal submissions and letters were received and more than 1,900 individuals took part in 249 meetings across the state. The result of this consultation is Blueprint for the Bush—the most

comprehensive and far-reaching plan for the bush ever produced in Australia. I had the great honour of launching it with my ministerial colleagues in Charleville last week.

*Tabled paper:* Report, dated 2006, by the Queensland government, AgForce Queensland and the Local Government Association of Queensland titled 'Blueprint for the Bush—Building a Sustainable, Liveable and Prosperous Rural Queensland'.

*Tabled paper:* Report, dated 2006, by the Queensland government, AgForce Queensland and the Local Government Association of Queensland titled 'Blueprint for the Bush—Rural Economic Development and Infrastructure Plan'.