



Speech by

**Hon. PETER BEATTIE**

**MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL**

Hansard Wednesday, 7 June 2006

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### TRAVESTON DAM

**Hon. PD BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (5.52 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'House' are deleted and the following words inserted—

1. endorses the state government's commitment to secure future water supplies for Queensland through a comprehensive strategy including:
  - a recycled water scheme for industry;
  - a regional water grid;
  - the proposed desalination plant at Tugun;
  - water saving initiatives for homes, businesses and local councils; and
  - new dams on the Mary and Logan rivers;
2. notes the proposed dam at Traveston on the Mary River, as with any new dam on any river, will require full environmental assessments and approvals and that the government is committed to meet the federal government's Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act as it did with the construction of Paradise Dam on the Burnett River where lungfish was also an issue; and
3. notes the government's commitment to fair compensation through its land acquisition process for the proposed dams.

In doing so I indicate very clearly that the reason this site has been chosen is fairly straightforward: we have the impact of the worst drought on record—the worst drought in 100 years—climate change and a booming population. What do those impacts require? A regional approach to long-term water security. Population projections predict that our population will nearly double over the next 50 years and large quantities of additional supplies of water will be required. Studies suggest that we will need at least 680,000 megalitres of water per year by 2050. That is an additional 230,000 megalitres than we have already. Traveston Crossing on the Mary River has been identified as a possible dam site in the Mary River region. As part of long-term water supply planning, the Queensland government has considered all dam site options in the region.

These studies indicate that Traveston Crossing is the only site left capable of accommodating a large water storage to secure the region's water supply. To achieve a similar supply would require Borumba Dam to be raised and the construction of at least three additional dams. Detailed investigations, including geotechnical works, are underway to determine if the site will deliver the best overall results. The dam will address the long-term growth that I mentioned before. The drilling program is designed to build a geological picture of the site and will test the bedrock, the soil and the proposed area for the dam wall. The drilling is expected to take four weeks unless there is some extension.

I will give members some idea of what is going on. This site was chosen because we need a regional approach to water because of the drought, because of climate change, because of population. The Traveston Crossing site has been selected because of its potential to provide significant quantities of water to meet the needs of the growing population of the south-east for the next 50 years and beyond.

Following studies of all possible sites in the region, Traveston Crossing was identified as the only remaining site in the region capable of accommodating a major water storage. In previous reports the Traveston Crossing site was rejected as its potential capacity was larger than needed for just the Mary River and the Sunshine Coast areas. A regional approach to water security is now required. Therefore, this site has been identified to help meet the needs of the whole south-east region and in particular the rapidly growing population on the Sunshine Coast. That population is increasing more rapidly than people had initially expected. The beneficiaries out of this proposal will be Gympie, because it will reduce flooding, and Maryborough, because it will reduce flooding. The people in that community will get water, the rapidly growing Sunshine Coast will get water and the south-east corner will get water.

We are trying to be responsive in terms of the individuals. We will pay appropriate compensation and work as hard as we can to protect this community. There will be a series of further consultations. Halls are booked around the area for meetings commencing on 19 June until 14 July. The first hardship urgent case has already been settled. Ninety-nine written requests for acquisitions or expressions of interest to sell have been received and passed on to the land acquisitions team. The land acquisitions team has progressed 39 of these cases and the remaining 60 are being processed. To date, 15 valuations have been completed and there have been 600 calls on the hotline. The number of daily calls has started to reduce. Yesterday, 19 calls were received and a total of 20 per cent of calls have been in relation to the EOI process.

We will do this in an environmentally appropriate way. We sorted through the issues in relation to the Paradise Dam. People said that we could not sort out issues involving the environment, flow and lungfish. We fixed the lot. We sorted every single one of them and we are determined to do the same thing here. We are not environmental vandals. We will ensure that there is appropriate river flow. We will ensure that we protect the lungfish in the same way in which we did with Paradise Dam. We will ensure that we have a water grid.

Over the last few sitting days of parliament I have tried to highlight that we have a comprehensive strategy. It is not just about dams; it is about recycling. Yes, it is about tanks. Yes, it is about making sure that we have desalination. Yes, it is about minimising demand. On Sunday I will be making a major announcement in relation to demand minimisation. We have to do all of these things. But if anybody thinks that they can just do part of it, which is what the opposition is claiming, they are wrong. The opposition had a strategy on water that was 24,800 megalitres short of what it claimed it to be. When it comes to these things, the opposition is basically hopeless and incompetent.

Our strategy is a long-term one. The opposition releases a strategy and it is 24,800 megalitres out based on the assessments. What hope has the opposition of being taken seriously. We have come up with a water grid that will provide for Queensland's future water needs up to 2050.