



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Thursday, 8 June 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Beattie Labor Government

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.43 am): I am proud to table an historic document today that contains tangible evidence of the hard work we have done in our eight years in government.

Not including this year's budget announcements or the 2006 update of the south-east Queensland plan, there are more than 100 pages of significant achievements that we have proudly delivered to the people of Queensland since 1998, upholding our commitment to make the Smart State a better place to live, work and visit. Copies of that full document are now being distributed to all members.

We are a government building tomorrow's Queensland today. Since the Beattie government was first elected in 1998 we have attracted investment in projects that will create over 13,500 new jobs and result in an estimated \$2.5 billion in capital expenditure. We have delivered Queensland's best economic management in decades. We have a record of strong budget surpluses and have maintained the state's AAA credit rating.

Through our strong economic management, Queensland has the lowest unemployment rate it has seen in three decades and the state's economic growth has outperformed the nation's for nine consecutive years. Indeed, with the latest update at the end of this financial year it will be 11 years. We have created 405,900 jobs for Queenslanders since we have come into government. I am happy to advise the House that for the first time we have exceeded 400,000.

My government has turned Queensland into the Smart State. The Smart State Research Facilities Fund has provided \$170 million to universities and private research organisations. The Innovation Building Fund has also provided \$128 million over four years to improve Queensland's research facilities. We have made Queensland an aviation hub for the region. Since 1998 more than 6,000 jobs have been created in Queensland aviation. My government attracted Virgin Blue to Queensland as well as Boeing, Australian Airlines, Qantas heavy maintenance, Australian Aerospace—a division of EADS Eurocopter—and Raytheon.

We have provided more than \$350 million in direct funding to Tourism Queensland since 1998 to boost Queensland's third largest export industry and established the world's first wine industry development portfolio. In fact, tourism is our second most important industry.

In April 2006 we established a new fund to prepare Queensland for the challenges of the future. The Queensland Future Growth Fund will dedicate over \$1 billion to future economic challenges. We have invested approximately \$20 billion in upcoming projects such as the PNG to Queensland gas pipeline, the Gladstone Pacific Nickel plant, the Macarthur coal coke plant and power station, the Spring Gully power station, the Abbot Point coal terminal expansion, the airport link road tunnel and the Aurukun bauxite mine and refinery project.

Since 1998 we have invested in a diverse range of major projects including the Comalco alumina refinery, the Capral Aluminium extrusion plant, the Qantas heavy maintenance facility, the north

Queensland gas pipeline, the Kogan Creek power station and mine, the Rolleston coalmine, the Suncorp Stadium redevelopment, the Dalrymple Bay coal terminal expansion, the Gateway upgrade project and Clermont Coal.

The South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan outlines investments of up to \$66 billion of infrastructure planned for the next 20 years, including almost \$28 billion in road and public transport projects, \$5 billion in social and community infrastructure, an expected \$5 billion in water infrastructure projects and \$4 billion on energy networks. The report deals with last year's south-east Queensland plan that has since been updated for 2006. From 1 July 1998 to 30 March 2006, almost \$8.5 billion has been spent on the building, maintenance and operation of the road network across Queensland. This equates to an average of \$1.06 billion per year.

As part of our commitment to the health action plan, we have allocated \$9.7 billion over five years to build a better health system. This unprecedented allocation of resources means better health services for Queenslanders and is helping to cut waiting lists, strengthen emergency departments, perform more operations and buy new technology and equipment. It is also delivering more doctors, more nurses, more allied health professionals and better training.

This is an education government. Our children will have their best ever chance of reaching their full potential with the introduction of a full-time non-compulsory prep year from 2007. Education and training reforms mean that students entering year 10 in 2006 are the first to take part in Queensland's new senior schooling laws, which require all young people to be learning or earning until they are 17. The establishment of two new smart academies will provide opportunities for our most talented senior students to fast-track their studies, gain invaluable work experience and combine their schooling with tertiary studies.

We are a government committed to preserving Queensland's quality of life and environment and have protected more than 80 per cent of the south-east corner from future urban development with the South East Queensland Regional Plan. This long-term blueprint will ensure south-east Queensland remains one of the most liveable urbanised areas in the world.

In 1999 the south-east Queensland forest agreement resulted in the immediate cessation of harvesting of an estimated 425,000 hectares of native forests. We are closing in on our target of protecting five per cent of Queensland as a national park. These are the lungs of our future, and the Beattie government is ensuring that this state will continue to breathe into the future. We are a government that recognises the cultural and economic importance of our communities, particularly in regional and remote areas. We created a committed portfolio in 2004 to help build stronger communities where Queenslanders feel safe, valued and empowered and have provided \$500 million to assist non-government organisations to deliver vital services to their communities.

We are a government protecting the interests of our vulnerable citizens. Disability Services Queensland was created in 1999 as the first disability focused department in Queensland's history. Spending topped \$0.5 billion after the 2005-06 budget—proof of my government's commitment to improving the quality of life for people with a disability, their families and their carers. In April 2002 we responded to the Cape York Justice Study with the Meeting Challenges, Making Choices initiatives to address alcohol and violence issues affecting Indigenous communities in Queensland through intervention, improved government services and better community engagement and development.

Queensland's at-risk children and young people are better protected than ever with a new dedicated Department of Child Safety, new legislation, more staff, better policies and a stronger emphasis on comprehensive service delivery, dramatically improving the quantity and quality of protection for vulnerable children. We are a government of action. We have not sat around with our heads in the sand for the last eight years like those opposite. We have worked and we have delivered for the people of Queensland, and we will continue to work and deliver. We will continue building tomorrow's Queensland today, and the Smart State will continue to prosper under a strong Labor government.

Tabled paper: Two copies of document titled 'Eight Years of the Beattie Government, Queensland Government, June 2006'.