



Speech by

**Hon. PETER BEATTIE**

**MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL**

Hansard Friday, 9 June 2006

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Water Infrastructure**

**Hon. PD BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.41 am): On another matter relating to water, I now turn to water security in south-east Queensland. On many occasions I have advised parliament of the priority my government is giving to future water supplies in south-east Queensland. Today I can inform the House about a number of steps being taken to ensure these projects are delivered on time and on budget.

A project board is being set up under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act to oversee and fast-track development of three key water infrastructure projects: the western corridor recycled water pipeline, the southern regional water pipeline and the Gold Coast desalination plant at Tugun. The board's priority will be to manage negotiations associated with the three projects. This will ensure that we deliver these projects as quickly as possible.

An initial immediate allocation of \$357 million has been earmarked to support these essential water supply projects while management and financing arrangements are finalised between the state and local governments. We anticipate our final equity contribution to these projects may be more than this. These projects are critical for water security for the region and we need to make sure funding arrangements are locked in so they will be delivered on time. Cabinet has endorsed the board membership, and upon the Governor's approval I will announce the names of those on the new board. We are absolutely committed to making these water projects happen and we will be asking local councils to step up and put their equity contributions on the table.

Moving on to the new dams on the Mary and Logan rivers, I can also announce that my government has just committed an initial \$8.6 million over six months to fund the operations of a new company dedicated to their construction. To be called Queensland Water Infrastructure Pty Ltd, the company will carry out a detailed impact assessment of the two proposed dams and obtain the environmental and other approvals necessary to allow construction to commence. In other words, this measure will fast-track the processes. It is estimated that some 20 people will be employed full-time by the company. Over the next 5½ years the company is expected to have a budget of \$100 million to manage the development of the dams through to final completion. We will finalise this at the midyear review.

In setting up this company, I again reassure the House that my government will do whatever it can to minimise the disruption to people's lives and the environment affected by the dams. A CEO and board of directors will be nominated shortly. When these appointments are finalised I will make them public. The total value of these initiatives, almost three quarters of a billion dollars, is my government's down payment on water security for south-east Queensland. This is about fast-tracking and delivering.