



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 9 August 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Water Supply

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.36 am): Yesterday afternoon I had a very productive meeting with the mayors of south-east Queensland. I was joined by the Deputy Premier and by the Minister Assisting the Premier on Water, Henry Palaszczuk. I asked them to come together so that I could outline the purpose of our new regulation on water declaring an emergency situation. I discussed the detail of the regulation as well as the reason for its necessity.

We are now officially in the worst drought on record and decisive action is needed to address the vital issue of water supply and, of course, security. Our government has acted. We have put in place a comprehensive Water Plan to tackle that challenge and provide that security. We are creating a water grid in south-east Queensland and supporting it with new infrastructure such as weirs, pipelines and dams. We are providing facilities for business and industry to use recycled water and helping to build a desalination plant on the Gold Coast.

Through a generous rebate scheme we are helping residents cut water use in their homes and we are undertaking an extensive community education and conservation program to help everyone to be more water wise. I table a copy of a brochure that sets out the WaterWise program together with details on the water grid and an application form for the Home WaterWise Rebate Scheme.

Tabled paper: Brochure titled 'You can help fight the drought and Save water and Save money' including an application form for the Home WaterWise Rebate Scheme.

Later today I will be providing copies of that to all members. Indeed, we will be distributing it as widely as we possibly can to the community.

South-east Queensland councils also have a major role to play because they own the assets such as the dams, treatment plants and pipelines. The new regulation we introduced yesterday requires councils and their water supply businesses to undertake a coordinated set of actions to help meet the water needs of the region. I am pleased to report that the councils were supportive of the regulation and committed to working with us to help tackle the challenge of water supply. I table for the information of the House the agreement signed by the mayors and me yesterday.

Tabled paper: Copy of the agreement signed with the South East Queensland Council of Mayors dated 8 August 2006.

It states—

We the undersigned, pledge to reaffirm our commitment to a regional approach and to work cooperatively and quickly to drought proof south east Queensland by 2015.

We are committed to getting on with the job and working in a spirit of partnership.