



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Tuesday, 28 November 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Public Service

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (10.19 am): At a time when we are experiencing unprecedented population growth, together with a world skills shortage, we need to ensure that we are geared to continue to provide top-class public services to the people of Queensland. Over the next 10 years the government faces many challenges. Not only are we in a rapidly tightening labour market; our workforce is ageing. About 40,000 people will leave the Public Service through retirement. This is a major problem that we are confronted with, but we are up to the challenge. My government is doing great work to attract and keep quality people to continue to deliver services to the people of Queensland.

The government is developing a 10-year strategy to make the Queensland government an employer of choice, looking at a variety of options. We are already on the job. My government is championing more flexible and modern recruitment practices; a government-wide graduate program; work-life balance to encourage people to re-enter and stay in the service; and strategies for attracting those 'in demand' professions, such as engineers and health professionals. I should say—and the minister for transport, Paul Lucas, knows this—that even in areas such as engineering people are pinching our best people every day, so we need to retain them.

We understand that with the unemployment rate at its lowest in over 20 years it has become a sellers market. It is important that we as a government position ourselves to be competitive in obtaining and keeping the people who will be able to deliver the best services. My government recognises the shift in the way people look for jobs, especially young people. Where previously job seekers would pore through Saturday's paper, research shows that over the past two years the use of the internet as the preferred channel for job searching has increased from 28 per cent to nearly 40 per cent.

The use of the Queensland government's own jobs web site 'Smart jobs and careers' increases monthly, with tens of thousands of subscribers. A new whole-of-government graduate program attracted nearly 1,000 applicants, two-thirds through the internet and a quarter through newspapers. Through our own 'Smart jobs and careers' web site alone, 2,800 people viewed our program.

We also understand that people now demand more flexibility in their work life. We will look at redesigning jobs, opening up new career pathways, working with tertiary institutions as feeders for government, increasing training and development opportunities and improving how we manage our staff. Some of the effort I have already mentioned may be challenging and may challenge traditional views, but my goal is for Queensland to be a leader in innovation and smart thinking, the Smart State. The Queensland government offers a fantastic variety of challenging and rewarding jobs and we will be out there ensuring that we are a first choice employer.

I table for the House our graduate program for 2006 and the trend that is occurring in terms of where we are recruiting from.

Tabled paper: Statistical information relating to advertising of the Queensland Government Graduate Program 2007

I do that simply to highlight the challenge that lies ahead. I have asked for copies to be provided to all members of the House. The Public Service is my responsibility as Premier, and I will be ensuring that everything is done to get the best for this state.