



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Thursday, 30 November 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Project Vista

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.45 am): I am pleased to notify the House that the government will today seek expressions of interest from the private sector to roll out an open access, ultra high-speed broadband network across Brisbane. I alluded to this proposal, known as Project Vista, in October and have received a positive response from a number of interested parties and from Queenslanders who are frustrated by the levels of broadband service they are currently receiving.

My government is taking action where the federal government is not. It has failed to deliver ultra high-speed broadband services to the general community and is holding back business development and innovation as a result. I note with interest that two of the country's biggest media players—Rupert Murdoch and James Packer—have publicly criticised the lack of action by the Howard government in this regard in recent weeks, but we are not going to sit around waiting for it to pick up its game. We could die waiting.

We have stepped in to work with the private sector to address this market failure. I understand Western Australia announced yesterday that it will follow our lead to bring that state into the 21st century as well. I seek leave to incorporate more details in *Hansard*. I table some media reports in relation to James Packer and Rupert Murdoch.

Tabled paper: Media articles dated 24 and 16 November 2006 concerning broadband services

Leave granted.

Mr Speaker, this is a leading Smart State project that has the potential to boost the Queensland economy by \$5 billion and create more than 15,000 jobs.

At 100 megabites per second—at least 100 times faster than regular broadband—the proposed network would eliminate frustrating download times for householders.

It will also offer businesses, industry and service providers the ability to transfer large files with ease, including engineering design files, x-rays and large medical files.

Mr Speaker, this project is possible in Brisbane because we have a supportive local council, and I thank the Lord Mayor for this support. We will work together to partner with the private sector and facilitate access to government-owned infrastructure to support the construction of a new network.

If the project proves successful in Brisbane, there may be future opportunities to roll out similar solutions across the rest of the state.

Expressions of Interest close on 28 February 2007.