



Speech by

Hon. Robert Swarten

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Department of Public Works

Hon. RE SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works, Housing and Information and Communication Technology) (10.44 am): The Queensland Department of Public Works is the powerful driving force behind many major government construction projects worth billions of dollars in this state. The general public hears very little about the role of the department or its outstanding expertise—not through the media, anyway. After all, the engine room is never as exciting as the bridge. The department's efforts do not make glorious headlines, but the department makes these projects happen nevertheless. It runs the design process. It sets the parameters of the budget. It runs the tender process. It is the department which manages the contractor to ensure projects are delivered on time and on budget—a tough task when the price of laying a brick can treble within a couple of months.

The Gabba, Suncorp Stadium, Dairy Farmers Stadium, the Gallery of Modern Art and the State Library are the social cathedrals of modern life. They are the places that Queenslanders in their thousands will come to together to celebrate sport, art and life in general. The Gabba has been enjoyed by tens of thousands of Queenslanders in the past week. It was completely redeveloped by the Queensland Department of Public Works.

I cannot claim that the design and construction of Suncorp Stadium was responsible for the winning performance of the Broncos this year. Darren Lockyer can do that. However, I can claim that the Department of Public Works was responsible for the building of this hugely successful world-class \$280 million stadium. In a fortnight one of the biggest pop stars in the world, Robbie Williams, will be performing there. At the end of the week I will join the Premier and Minister Welford in opening the Gallery of Modern Art. The Millennium Arts Precinct development is the outcome of six years of partnering between the Department of Public Works and Arts Queensland. It was overseen by the specialist in the Department of Public Works and built by Bovis Lend Lease. It is the largest arts construction project in Queensland's history and was delivered on time and on budget by this government.

Last week I visited Skilled Park at the Gold Coast and can advise the House that this \$160 million project is proceeding very well. Again, it is being overseen by the Department of Public Works while this time the contractor is WATPAC.

Finally, I want to advise Queenslanders who are interested in becoming tradesmen and women that 100 Q-Build apprenticeships are on offer and will close on Friday, 1 December. We are the only government in the world, as far as I know, that trains apprentices to this extent.