



Speech by

Hon. Warren Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

Hansard Tuesday, 8 August 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Blueprint for the Bush

Hon. FW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Seniors) (10.23 am): On 1 June the Premier launched the Blueprint for the Bush and its companion Rural Economic Development and Infrastructure Plan at Croxdale Station outside Charleville. The development of the blueprint is the culmination of an historic collaboration between the Queensland government, AgForce Queensland and the Local Government Association of Queensland. This is the first time a Queensland government has clearly articulated a vision for the future of rural Queensland: the vision for a strong rural Queensland of sustainable, liveable and prosperous communities.

The blueprint is not just about a vision for the future; it is also about action. Regrettably, the opposition—and particularly the member for Warrego—only want to bash and belittle the things the government is doing and the effort it is making on behalf of rural and country Queensland.

Mr Hobbs: Tell the truth about the new money.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Warrego!

Mr PITT: The member should ask a question about that.

Mr Hobbs interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Warrego, I warn you under 253.

Mr PITT: The Queensland government listened to the voices of the bush and responded with an initial new investment of \$153.4 million for specific Blueprint for the Bush initiatives in addition to an already significant investment in services and infrastructure. This is the first step in securing ongoing investment for rural Queensland communities throughout the lifetime of the blueprint. At the recent AgForce state conference in Charleville I was pleased to announce the first round of funding under the \$30 million Strengthening Rural Communities Strategy. The Building Rural Links funding will provide an immediate \$500,000 boost to strengthen rural services.

The Queensland government is getting on with the job and is standing up for all Queenslanders. The blueprint is a challenging yet exciting plan for new partnerships, new investments and new opportunities for rural Queenslanders. I will continue to lead the blueprint on behalf of the state government and work with my ministerial colleagues to deliver benefits and to identify new opportunities over time. I am determined to promote the blueprint across Queensland and together with my parliamentary secretary, Kerry Shine, I have embarked on a tour of key centres to ensure that communities are aware of the blueprint's benefits. So far Kerry Shine has hosted blueprint briefings in Roma and Toowoomba and will do so again next week in Mount Isa. Next week I will be conducting stakeholder briefings in Townsville and Rockhampton. I am confident that the initiatives contained in the Blueprint for the Bush will go a long way towards securing a sustainable future for Queensland's rural communities, which in turn will contribute significantly to a strong Queensland economy—something that sits at the top of the government's priorities.

Tabled paper: Copy of ministerial statement by Hon. W Pitt titled 'Blueprint for the Bush Implementation'.