



Speech by

Hon. Andrew Fraser

MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Population Growth

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport) (10.22 am): Queensland is continuing to undergo historic, unprecedented population growth which in turn places us in the enviable but confronting position of leading the nation's growth. The department of local government and planning's Planning Information and Forecasting Unit will today release its latest analysis of population data based on the preliminary results of the 2006 census.

The analysis shows annual population growth in the south-east corner between the 2001 census and the 2006 census averaged 66,000 people. That equates to adding a city the size of Rockhampton to the south-east corner every year. Brisbane, with an extra 19,100 people, and the Gold Coast, with an extra 16,700 people, recorded the largest annual average growth of any local government area in the nation. They comprise a significant part of the 2.6 per cent growth across the south-east corner.

Caloundra grew at 4.1 per cent, Maroochy recorded growth of 3.7 per cent, while Crows Nest grew at 5.30 per cent and Cambooya grew at 3.9 per cent. Our regional cities also continued to record strong average annual growth, with Mackay experiencing a growth rate of 3.5 per cent, Hervey Bay a growth rate of 4.9 per cent and Thuringowa a growth rate of 3.6 per cent. Cairns, at the heart of the new FNQ 2025 Statutory Regional Plan, grew by 3,786 people to lead the growth outside the south-east corner.

To put all of that in context, the overall rate of Queensland's growth between the two censuses was 2.4 per cent. National growth was 1.3 per cent. In fact, two of our three fastest growing areas were outside the south-east corner. Weipa had an annual growth rate of 6.9 per cent while Nebo had a growth rate of 5.1 per cent. This is critical information for strategic planning, an essential part of which is building stronger, more sustainable councils.

The independent Local Government Reform Commission quite rightly used population growth, along with future population projects, in reaching its recommendations. The area immediately north of Brisbane, for example, which will be incorporated in the new Moreton Bay Regional Council will accommodate about 11 per cent of south-east Queensland's future population and housing growth over the next 20 years. That speaks volumes for the need for streamlined local government in those areas. It speaks volumes that our fastest-growing areas are in our resources corridor and along the coast where we need to create more robust councils.

The information being released today on the back of the census data is indispensable. It is crucial as we deal with our phenomenal growth to maintain all that is great about this state of ours for future generations.