



Speech by

Hon. ANNA BLIGH

MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Water Infrastructure

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure) (9.51 am): I thank the Premier very much for talking again about the Traveston Crossing Dam, one of my favourite subjects. I would actually suggest that that report is worthy of letterboxing, at least in the Gympie electorate. But I am happy to advise the House that the water storage efforts of our government are not limited to the south-east. Last Thursday I opened a vital water pipeline feeding Queensland's resource-rich Bowen Basin. This pipeline is expected to deliver up to 60 million extra tonnes of coal and another 4,000 jobs for the region. The Burdekin to Moranbah pipeline will transport water from the Gorge Weir to new and existing mines in the northern Bowen Basin. The 220 kilometre pipeline from Burdekin Falls Dam to Moranbah is one component of an overall pipeline project worth \$300 million. This milestone demonstrates our government's commitment to ensuring a reliable water supply for the future of Queensland right across the state. Not only will it guarantee a continuation of existing water supplies, it ensures that the rapid expansion plans for the region's multibillion-dollar coal industry can be realised.

While in Moranbah I also announced that the state government and the companies associated with the township of Moranbah and the Belyando shire have agreed in principle to supply up to seven megalitres a day of water from the pipeline to Moranbah for the 2007-08 financial year. In short, the first 5.5 million litres a day are provided to the town virtually free of charge. The additional 1.5 million litres a day is being made available to cope with urban growth in that township for which the council is being asked to pay, after state government and industry subsidies, around \$240 per megalitre or less than 10 per cent of the delivered cost. Given that south-east Queensland residents are living with a daily water use averaging less than 140 litres a day, the water allocation to the township of Moranbah of around 800 litres per person per day is by comparison very generous.

The pipeline, delivered by SunWater in partnership with six foundation users, began in late 2005 with about 300 workers involved in building the pipeline. They had to battle tough terrain, blistering heat, Cyclone Larry related delays and isolated conditions to ensure that the pipeline was laid in time. I commend every one of them on a job well done. Construction crews laid the pipe at an unprecedented speed, averaging 1.1 kilometres per day for nearly seven months to allow the economic boom of mining to continue. The overall Moranbah pipeline project also comprises two smaller pipelines—a 50 kilometre eastern pipeline from Moranbah to Coppabella which was commissioned in November 2006 and a 70 kilometre southern pipeline from Moranbah in the direction of Dysart which will be completed within weeks. The state played a major role in planning and facilitating the project and declared the Moranbah pipeline project as works under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act which helped to ensure the timely delivery of these projects by utilising relevant powers when necessary. This pipeline is one part of a total water supply solution for the Bowen Basin. SunWater is now set to carry out further investigations into the Connors River Dam project which will deliver further water security.