



Speech by

Hon. ANNA BLIGH

MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE

Hansard Thursday, 6 September 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Fuel Subsidy

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure) (9.55 am): Two weeks ago the Premier and I announced that the state government had established a commission of inquiry to determine why up to \$125 million of the \$541 million a year fuel subsidy is not reaching the pockets of Queensland motorists. We announced that former Queensland Court of Appeal judge and former Federal Court judge Bill Pincus QC will head the inquiry, which is to report by November. I can advise the House today that the office of the commissioner has been established and is located in the Brisbane Magistrates Court. The office of the commissioner consists of Commissioner Bill Pincus QC, counsel assisting PJ Davis SC and JM Horton, and secretary Kate Bannerman. An executive assistant to the commissioner and a document management expert are expected to start in the office on Monday, 10 September. Commission staff have been liaising with experts, including economists, and also investigating the practical operations of the fuel subsidy scheme.

A web site—www.fuelsubsidycommission.qld.gov.au—is currently being designed and is due to be launched in the week commencing 10 September. The web site will include information on upcoming hearings, how Queenslanders can have their say and information on the inquiry and the commissioner. The terms of reference of the fuel subsidy commission of inquiry have been finalised and will be available on the web site. An opening statement is expected next week beginning 10 September. Dr John Fallon has been engaged to assist the inquiry by providing expert evidence on the opening day of the inquiry. I can understand the state's fuel industry has changed, but I cannot accept that that means our motorists miss out. We established this commission to make sure that we as a government and that we as Queenslanders are getting the full value of our subsidy. I am confident that with the calibre of those working on the inquiry we will all have a clearer basis on which to make future policy decisions if necessary.