



Speech by

**Fiona Simpson**

**MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE**

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## QUEENSLAND WORKPLACES

**Miss SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.58 am): Better infrastructure and a smarter way of using it are the answers to many of the current and future growth management issues in south-east Queensland. While the primary focus of government should still be on delivering better roads and public transport, the state Liberal-National coalition believes government must also lead the way with its own workforce by supporting more flexibility in where and when they work, with the benefits being to reduce peak hour traffic and travel times, to improve people's lifestyle and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. With traffic congestion worsening and commuters spending more time stuck in their cars travelling to and from work, it is time we carefully considered how our workplaces operate now and into the future. A year ago the Riverside Expressway was closed and many workers showed that they were willing to change their travelling practices and working hours.

However, sustaining telecommuting—or green commuting—and more flexible work arrangements requires ongoing support with IT systems, leadership in the workforce and best practice communication rostering practices to ensure continuity of service to the public. There is ample evidence that there are significant benefits for government and the wider community if this occurs and such practices are no longer treated as soft issues but core business with strategic advantages. I refer to the *Sensis Insights teleworking report* of June 2000, the Australian Telework Advisory Committee report of 2006 and the University of Bradford's sustainable teleworking 2004 report in terms of a number of the benefits that those reports encountered and suggestions to make this achievable.

As one of the largest employers, state government has the opportunity to significantly and positively affect peak hour movements given that there are about 24,000 public servants in the Brisbane CBD, or about 11 per cent of the CBD workforce. Not all jobs will suit these practices, but why not give workers whose jobs are suitable a choice and the support? Of course this has benefits for the private workforce as well.

Time expired.