



Speech by

Hon. Geoff Wilson

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

Hansard Thursday, 8 February 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Electricity Supply

Hon. GJ WILSON (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Mines and Energy) (9.49 am): Our drought, the worst in living memory, has put pressure on Queensland's most vital commodities: water and power. Having said that, I am advised that there are more than enough electricity reserves to meet the peak demands this summer and the next, with a capacity of around 10,500 megawatts. When the new Kogan Creek Power Station comes on line later this year, add a further 750 megawatts. That is more than 11,000 megawatts—well in excess of the record demand recorded last month. There are more than 4,500 megawatts of generating capacity in central Queensland. The lines linking central and southern Queensland can also transfer up to 1,900 megawatts to Brisbane.

Queensland is in a strong position to meet future electricity demand. This is reflected in a report by the independent market operator, NEMMCO. It highlights our strong growth, the highest in the national electricity market, and it recognises the level of committed investment in the Queensland electricity sector. For instance, the 450 megawatt Braemar Power Station near Dalby was opened only last year by the Premier. In addition to our existing capacity, we have a significant number of new projects on the drawing board. These include the 1,000 megawatt Spring Gully proposal by Origin Energy, the Australian Gas Light company's 370 megawatt proposal near Townsville and Origin Energy announced yesterday a second 500 megawatt gas-fired power station at Braemar. There are a number of other projects which, if found to be commercially viable, will deliver an additional 2,000 megawatts of generating power.

If these are approved, they will provide more than enough electricity to meet the expected growth in demand. This translates to a total of more than 3,000 megawatts on the drawing board—well in excess of the projected growth in demand of up to four per cent per year. Powerlink is also boosting our electricity supply through new investments, including the Middle Ridge to Greenbank transmission line, which is expected to be up and running by next summer.

We are building now to meet future electricity needs. The \$1.7 billion western corridor recycled water pipeline will also provide recycled water to the Tarong and Swanbank power stations when it is completed. Tarong Energy has modified output at Tarong Power Station during periods of low demand until the delivery of the recycled water pipeline by June next year. What we are putting in place now is our investment in the long-term future of each and every Queenslanders.