



Speech by

Hon. Margaret Keech

MEMBER FOR ALBERT

Hansard Wednesday, 21 February 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Tourism Strategy

Hon. MM KEECH (Albert—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Fair Trading, Wine Industry Development and Women) (10.15 am): The Beattie government is helping Queensland's regions develop exciting new tourism initiatives. I am very pleased to announce that a \$4 million funding boost for regional tourism organisations is an early outcome from our \$48 million Queensland Tourism Strategy. The initial allocation of \$1 million this year will allow destinations throughout the state to create dynamic new tourism experiences to attract more visitors.

The extra funding has made possible a diverse range of projects in areas from far-north Queensland to the Southern Downs. Gladstone and the Sunshine Coast are targeting important international markets with the installation of electronic language translators and schemes to promote regional tourism products overseas. The Bundaberg and Capricorn regions will use their funding to employ staff dedicated to packaging and selling each destination by forging partnerships with businesses and local government. Here in Brisbane the development of a river transport system to improve access from the city to Moreton Bay and the islands will be explored.

The grants do two things: they reaffirm the Beattie government's commitment to the tourism industry and they continue the development of our important regions. The grants bring ongoing direct funding for RTOs to \$6 million a year. The government also provides more than \$3 million for marketing and administration and another \$1.89 million for convention funding.

The QTS, which was the first long-term plan for the tourism industry, was a key Beattie government election promise to secure the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the state's third largest export earner. These grants recognise the importance of our regions to our tourism industry. Quite simply, the more tourists we can attract to our regions, the more jobs are created.

Mr Johnson: You have not mentioned western Queensland.

Ms KEECH: This increased financial and resource support from the Beattie government will help the regions continue to grow as key tourism destinations. They will be further supported by the government's new \$6.5 million 'Where else but Queensland' television campaign, where western Queensland plays a key role, which the Premier recently launched. These initiatives are the first of many ongoing benefits to be seen by the industry under the Beattie government's Queensland Tourism Strategy.