



Speech by

Hon. Paul Lucas

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

Hansard Wednesday, 14 March 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Inner Northern Busway

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.12 am): I apologise in this era of new dress standards if I have a hard hat here. I have it here because I have just inspected the construction of another important piece of Queensland government transport infrastructure and I am pleased to announce it is ahead of schedule. This morning I have inspected progress on the \$333 million inner city extension to Brisbane's Inner Northern Busway. The good news is that it is six months ahead of the construction timetable and could be removing buses from city streets by the middle of next year.

I apologise for the temporary inconvenience the construction of the busway has caused businesses, pedestrians and motorists, but once complete the INB inner city extension will be the catalyst for a lifestyle makeover. With buses off the streets, it will slash road congestion and create a pedestrian-friendly precinct where people will want to come to shop. Innovative construction and contracting, as well as drier weather, have combined to accelerate works. That means that improvements to Albert Street can be delivered sooner with new paving work to begin within weeks. The roof will soon be finished over the crucial underground section from the Queen Street Bus Station to King George Square. The busway tunnel is being excavated from Queen Street through to King George Square and the tunnel floor construction is underway as I speak. Digging on the remaining tunnel section through to Turbot Street should be completed by late April.

The INB heralds a new era of connectivity for public transport in Brisbane. Buses will link directly with the Roma Street Transit Centre, Airtrain, Citytrain and Traveltrain networks as well as long distance coaches—760 trains and 2,000 buses a day. It also will slash travel times for bus commuters by up to 20 minutes in peak times. We are giving commuters real alternatives to using their cars. That means less road congestion and a reduction in greenhouse gases. The INB inner city extension is concrete evidence that the Beattie government is delivering an accessible and user-friendly public transport system for Brisbane and the south-east.