



Speech by

Hon. Paul Lucas

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

Hansard Tuesday, 13 November 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Water Grid

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (9.52 am): This year's end is nearing—so I am feeling like I am that old—so a report card on the progress of the \$9 billion south-east Queensland water grid is more than warranted. As the House is aware, the government's commitment to deliver water to the people of south-east Queensland has resulted in significant activity this year. Firstly, at the start of the year the three key projects—the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project, the southern regional water pipeline and the Gold Coast desalination plant—were in the early stages of implementation.

Today I can report that the water grid is no longer myriad lines on a map but a concrete, rock-solid infrastructure project that remains on schedule and on budget. More than 170 kilometres—almost 40 per cent—of the 450 kilometres of pipe that makes up the grid, are now in the ground. More than 55 per cent of the pipe required for the water grid has been delivered, and we have contracts in place for all but the final 50 kilometres, which is currently out for tender.

Stage 1A of the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project is complete and already delivering water to Swanbank, reducing the demand on Wivenhoe Dam's drinking water supplies. And the good news is that we have laid more than 51 per cent of the total pipe needed for the project.

Stage 1B of the Bundamba Advanced Water Treatment Plant is well underway and so, too, are the plants at Gibson Island and Luggage Point. The Gold Coast desalination plant is more than 43 per cent complete and is on schedule for expected construction completion in November 2008, with full output of 125 megalitres a day from January 2009. The 100-kilometre southern regional water pipeline connecting the Brisbane and Gold Coast distribution networks is almost 60 per cent complete, with more than 58 kilometres in the ground. Work on stage 1 of the northern pipeline interconnector has started.

Cedar Grove Weir remains on target for operation by the end of the year, and the Bromelton offstream storage has been brought forward for completion by mid-2008. Comprehensive, detailed and important environmental impact statements have been released for the proposed Traveston Crossing and the Wyaralong dams, and the government's resolve to deliver these long-term water security measures remains as strong as ever.

Collectively, some 3,500 workers on water grid projects are working in over 45 different locations and have clocked up more than five million man hours of work. This is an effort that is sometimes lost in terms of magnitude but these projects collectively represent the largest urban drought response in Australia's history, and we are delivering it. In the coming weeks, workers on water grid projects will take a Christmas break and will return to site throughout January. This break is planned, this break is deserved, and it will have no impact on our time frames. I want to pass on this government's thanks to all those workers who are making these vital water grid projects a reality.

Unlike the state opposition, which has a do-nothing approach to guaranteeing water security and cannot even agree on which bits of our plans it disagrees with, we are getting on with the job. Unlike the Brisbane City Council, which is not holding up its end of the bargain in terms of fixing pressure and leakage

problems, we are rolling up our sleeves and getting the work done. This year, 2007, has been the year that our planning work has turned into work on and in the ground. It has been a major year of achievement by workers right across the south-east. I am sure many members wonder what 2008 will bring for the water grid. The answer from the state government is simple: more hard work.