



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Tuesday, 17 April 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Council for the Australian Federation

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.54 am): On Thursday I attended a meeting of the Council for the Australian Federation with my fellow state premiers and first ministers in the lead-up to COAG. There were important decisions there affecting Queensland. I seek leave to incorporate details in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The Council discussed key issues on the COAG agenda including the progression of the National Reform Agenda, climate change and health workforce.

In addition, the Council discussed issues of ongoing work, particularly the most recent report from the National Emissions Trading Taskforce, and a number of key issues of public concern such as improving tsunami warning systems, and increasing the links between the Australian and East Timorese governments.

The Council noted that Australian States and Territories have been leading the way in Australia in commissioning work on designing a national emissions trading scheme, following the formation of the National Emissions Trading Taskforce in 2004.

On 9 February 2007 the Council announced that State and Territories will introduce a national emissions trading scheme by the end of 2010 if the Commonwealth Government does not commit to a scheme following the report of the Prime Ministers' Task Group on Emissions Trading.

The Council repeated its call on the Commonwealth to:

- work collaboratively with the States and Territories through COAG to implement a national emissions trading scheme; and
- discuss emissions trading at a Climate Change Summit in the second half of 2007, once both the Commonwealth's Task Group and the States' and Territories' National Emissions Trading Taskforce have delivered their final reports.

The Council:

- agreed that a national emissions trading scheme should place Australia on a path towards achieving a 60% cut in national emissions by 2050, compared with 2000 levels;
- endorsed the National Emissions Trading Taskforce's timeline for the implementation of a national emissions trading scheme by the end of 2010.

Mr Speaker, another key outcome of the meeting was an agreement to ask the Commonwealth to share information on optimum systems and processes that enable the rapid and reliable communication of tsunami warning information to affected communities on a 24/7 basis.

This is a key initiative that I have personally raised with the Prime Minister.

The recent threat of a tsunami hitting Australian shores exposed flaws in the nation's preparedness for certain disasters.

Unfortunately climate change is going to expose our country to more frequent and severe natural disasters—worse than has been faced in thousands of years.

We face increasing risk from cyclones, storm surges, sea level rises, bushfire, heatwave, drought and increase in the spread of diseases.

We need to be more proactive in our planning for these disasters and consider a shared investment in initiatives.

Mr Speaker, I will also be writing to the Prime Minister to suggest that a national cooperative research centre on disasters be established to undertake more research and development.

We already have a similar centre based in Victoria looking specifically at bushfires but I think Queensland would be the ideal location for a centre to look at the bigger 'all hazards' picture and the impact of all natural and man made disasters including terrorism.