



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Tuesday, 5 June 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Beattie Labor Government

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.49 am): The nine years of my Labor government have been marked by a strong and robust state economy, low unemployment and record spending on essential services such as health, education and police. It has been nine years of achievement—for the economy, health, education, infrastructure, social policy, the environment and the arts. During that time we have overseen the creation of the Smart State. We have undertaken a major overhaul of our education and training systems and positioned our leading research institutions in emerging industries at the cutting edge of developments in biotechnology, information and communications technology, and aviation. Each June as we approach the anniversary of my government's time in office I report to parliament and the people of Queensland on the achievements of the government that I have had the privilege to lead.

This year I can report that the government has once again delivered strong economic management. During our nine years in government we have never lost sight of the need to create jobs for Queenslanders. This year we have delivered Queensland's lowest unemployment rate in three decades. In April 2000 the Queensland unemployment rate fell to 3.7 per cent, the lowest level since the current series of records began, and less than half the rate of unemployment inherited from the coalition in 1998. My government has set strong agendas. We have also responded with vigour and candour to emerging issues. Today I table the document titled *Nine years of the Beattie government*. It details many of the key achievements of my government during this time in office, and I seek leave for the remainder of my ministerial statement to be incorporated in *Hansard*.

Tabled paper: Document, dated June 2007, by the Queensland Government titled 'Nine Years of the Beattie Government'.

Leave granted.

Many parts of Queensland are now in the grip of the worst drought on record, particularly in the south east, the fastest growing region of the State. In response we have initiated a major infrastructure program. We are spending more than \$9 billion to build the water grid and drought proof south east Queensland.

The South East Queensland Water Grid has 400 kilometres of pipelines, three advanced wastewater treatment plants, two new dams and upgrades to several other water storages.

We are building a desalination plant on the Gold Coast, are promoting water wise initiatives, and will use purified recycled water to supplement south-east Queensland's water supply.

The new water infrastructure is just one element of the South-east Queensland Infrastructure Plan that will deliver more than \$80 billion in infrastructure over the coming 20 years.

Queensland is also at the forefront in meeting the challenge of climate change and global warming. We are funding world first research into clean coal technologies and are strongly promoting alternative energy sources. We have also put in place tough vegetation management laws to protect native forests.

My government is committed to delivering first class services in Queensland and is determined to ensure all Queenslanders share the benefits of our strong economic performance.

We have dramatically increased spending on disability services and child protection services.

We acknowledge the entrenched disadvantage faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are working with Indigenous communities to address them.

We are also supporting the long-term sustainability of rural and regional communities through the Blueprint for the Bush initiatives which includes a total of 170 projects and new funding of \$153 million.

The Arts are also performing well in Queensland. In December 2006 I opened the new Gallery of Modern Art and redeveloped State Library of Queensland.

The new Cultural Centre integrates art, design and architecture and ensures that the State's flagship cultural institutions play a vital role in housing Queensland's treasures and artworks for current and future generations.

The Government is also rolling out \$10 billion in extra funding through the Health Action Plan over five years as part of a long-term commitment to build the best health system in Australia.

As a result we are transforming Queensland Health into a more attractive place to work. Since June 2005, Queensland Health has recruited 1,036 extra doctors; 3,157 extra nurses; and 1,126 extra allied health professionals.

This year we have seen the latest instalment in the government's education vision for the future with the introduction of the new full-time, universally available Prep Year in all State and non-State schools.

The Government is also delivering the lowest middle year class sizes in the country, with Queensland's Year 4-10 class size targets reduced from 30 to 28.

These are just some of the highlights from our nine years of achievements which are outlined in great detail in this document.

Mr BEATTIE: I will also arrange for copies of the nine-year achievement document to be distributed to all members, along with copies of the climate change report.