



Speech by

# Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 5 September 2007

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Main Beach, Illegal Constructions

**Hon. PD BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.35 am): Today the owners of 17 multimillion-dollar properties fronting Main Beach will receive an order to demolish gazebos, patios and garden fences that they have illegally built along one of the state's most popular beaches. Officers from the Department of Natural Resources and Water estimate that property owners along Main Beach have taken control of \$3 million of public land for their own use. Today we are drawing a line in the sand and those people who are blocking public access to the land illegally will have 28 days to demolish or remove fences, gardens, paving and other encroachments built on the publicly owned beach.

Queensland has a proud tradition of ensuring that the beaches belong to everybody. Main Beach is one of the Gold Coast's best known beaches and a recent survey by the department of natural resources found 17 coastal properties encroached on coastal dunes at the back of the beach between David Evans Reserve and Hollandale Park. Encroachments include a paved area, a patio, gardens, garden edging and lawn. They include steel fencing completely enclosing a five-metre strip of state land. A thatched gazebo is partly built on this land, and there is also a brush fence enclosing a two-metre strip of state land.

I am informed by the Minister for Natural Resources and Water that some owners already have already removed illegal fences after being told about a July survey by the department. The minister also says other residents have claimed that local councils approved their use of the land despite the fact that the councils have no power to do so. The Land Act 1994 prohibits a person from occupying, enclosing, building or maintaining a structure on state land. Property owners who refuse to remove encroachments could have them removed at their expense and face fines of up to \$30,000. In 2003 around 15 owners of beachside properties at Mermaid Beach were told to remove encroachments on beach land. Gold Coast beaches are famous throughout the world and they will remain open to everybody, not just the very rich.

For the information of the House, I have photographs which highlight a fence. There is another photo that does exactly the same thing. I table these and urge members to have a look at them so they will understand why the government is quite rightly concerned about this sort of behaviour.

*Tabled paper:* 18 photographs of encroachments on Crown land.

All we want is a fair go for all Australians. One thing about Australia that I love and I hope we all love is our egalitarianism, and we are determined to maintain it.