



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR INALA

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ROADS INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (11.19 am): The Bligh government is getting on with the job of building the infrastructure needed for Queensland. Roads are the backbone of the economy—connecting communities, providing access to services and supporting commerce and industry throughout our state. I am pleased that the Rudd Labor government is taking the global financial crisis seriously and has developed an unprecedented \$42 billion economic stimulus package for our nation. This package will also create numerous jobs here in Queensland, particularly within the road sector.

Components of the Rudd government stimulus package have been allocated to roadworks across the nation and include an extra \$150 million in funding this financial year for critical maintenance work on the National Highway network, and a further \$30 million for national black spot projects in 2008-09 and \$60 million in 2009-10. In particular, I am advised that the evidence suggests that, for every \$1 million that we spend on our maintenance program on the National Highway, it creates between 20 and 50 jobs. So this stimulus package is generating jobs.

In Queensland we are getting on with the job of building more roads and connecting communities. As outlined in the state budget papers, investment by the Bligh government is reflected in the Main Roads capital program, which has increased significantly from \$610 million in 2003-04 to \$2.241 billion in 2007-08 to \$3.2 billion in 2008-09. As members can see, we are consistently increasing the funding for our road networks and this is providing much-needed jobs for our local community.

Today I would like to outline the major road projects which are currently underway and providing employment in south-east Queensland. This government is committed to managing urban traffic growth and congestion in the south-east corner and announced the nation's largest road infrastructure project last year—the combined \$4.8 billion dollar Airport Link, northern busway extension and airport roundabout upgrade. The \$1.88 billion second Gateway Bridge river crossing and upgrade of the Gateway Motorway is another major project generating significant employment over the coming years. In addition to these projects, the Department of Main Roads is delivering a \$7.9 billion roads program over the next five years in the south-east corner. These works alone should provide sustainable employment for almost 12,000 people on average every year in roads and supporting industries over this five-year period.

A range of transport projects is underway to transform Brisbane's western corridor. Some \$47 million will be spent this year to continue construction of the two-lane Centenary Highway from Springfield to join the Cunningham Highway at Yamanto. This \$366 million project represents sustained employment for some 950 people over the life of the project. Last year the member for Ipswich West, Wayne Wendt, and I had the opportunity to view this road extension firsthand. This highway will connect communities and provide the necessary transport corridor for the new communities of Ripley and outer Springfield. We are putting in the infrastructure to cater for future growth and development.

Locally in my electorate the \$255 million federally funded upgrade of the Wacol to Darra section of the Ipswich Motorway continues, with the widening of a five-kilometre section from four to six lanes. A total of \$170 million is planned to be spent this year, which should provide employment to more than 1,300 people in the 2008-09 financial year. The transport projects in the western corridor are some of the most

complex and challenging ever undertaken in Queensland, and are expected to deliver improved traffic flow and travel times well into the future.

Last week the member for Mount Ommaney, Julie Attwood, reopened the Bullockhead Street off-ramp along the Centenary Highway into Sumner. She had campaigned extensively and listened to the community about its planned reopening late this year. The federally funded Ipswich-Logan interchange project has a planned spend of \$54 million this year. Once again, sustained employment for 1,000 people has been maintained over the two-year period of this project delivery.

Elsewhere the upgrading of the Pacific Motorway between Nerang and Tugun continues with works on interchanges at Nerang South and Mudgeeraba. Some \$43 million is planned to be spent in 2009, providing employment for 225 people this year on this jointly funded state and federal project. The duplication at Redcliffe of the Houghton Highway continues. Expenditure of \$89 million this year equates to approximately 694 direct and indirect jobs.

All of these projects and many more are being delivered in south-east Queensland at a time when there is a need for generation of significant job opportunities in our region. The Bligh government is getting on with the business of building infrastructure and ensuring that we maintain and create jobs in this industry.