



Speech by

Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM, CIVIL CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (11.35 am): Queensland's upcoming infrastructure projects must be detailed in a clear, committed time frame to provide better job security and certainty to the civil construction industry which provides these jobs. The industry has endured the state Labor government's shifting time frames and delays on projects during the good times, but government procedures need to immediately be improved to suit today's economic climate and provide greater certainty. The department of infrastructure has continually delayed projects and shifted starting dates. The industry needs dependable time lines and project rollouts to create job security. I have met with the Civil Contractors Federation, which forecasts that up to one in three jobs could go from the industry by the middle of the year. I call on the Labor government to release specific starting dates and schedules for upcoming infrastructure projects, including all projects to be created by the federal stimulus package.

The state government also needs to guarantee that jobs created by the stimulus package are not bundled together into a few major contracts but are shared across the industry and across the state. This will create more jobs and greater certainty. Small and mid sized contractors are already struggling with a lack of jobs under \$30 million, and larger businesses are also starting to bid for these jobs.

There is also a need to address the issue of apprentices and trainees who are midway through their training to ensure that there is support, that they can transition across that training and that they do not have to finish up their training if work with one employer finishes. That requires the assistance of government to provide them with job security to ensure that their training can be completed, and that must be part of this package. The South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program has morphed into an aspirational document instead of being a reliable plan for industry to work with. Industry is demanding greater certainty about what projects will be on the table in the short to mid term and they want the regional plan to accurately reflect what the government will deliver rather than the flip-flop that we have seen to date.