



Speech by

Hon. Robert Swarten

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Hansard Wednesday, 22 April 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Nation Building—Economic Stimulus Plan

Hon. RE SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology) (10.24 am): Work is underway on the Queensland implementation of the Australian government's \$42 billion Nation Building—Economic Stimulus Plan. It is anticipated the plan will inject over \$4 billion into Queensland's economy over three financial years and support up to 30,000 jobs. This includes \$2.7 billion for Building the Education Revolution projects, \$1.2 billion for social housing and over \$100 million for roads and safety projects. My department is coordinating the delivery of the education and social housing projects on behalf of the departments of education and training, communities and main roads. To ensure the maximum economic impact, the projects will be rapidly delivered to support employment and economic growth.

During February and March 2009, nearly 3,000 people attended information sessions hosted by the Department of Public Works in Brisbane and major regional centres. These sessions explained the need for contractors and consultants to prequalify or register to be eligible to tender on nation-building projects.

To assist schools with the Building the Education Revolution school infrastructure program, 119 conditional contracts have been awarded so far to 35 design-and-construct contractors and 23 project managers. The project managers and contractors are working with schools and P&Cs to identify design options that meet the Commonwealth's funding guidelines. This early stage will see work commence on up to 220 Queensland schools before the end of June.

The social housing program is also progressing quickly, with over 500 submissions received so far for stage 1 projects. Due to overwhelming interest from the Queensland development industry, the closing date for requests for offers for the delivery of social housing projects has been extended to 31 May. Offers will be called for stage 2 of the social housing program today.

The Nation Building—Economic Stimulus Plan is good news for Queensland. It will mean jobs for builders, subcontractors and consultants—both big and small—and it is a true sign of a true Labor government. The Department of Public Works has a proven track record when it comes to delivering projects on time and on budget and is currently delivering more than \$8.5 billion worth of infrastructure projects for the government. The stimulus package will provide \$4 billion on top of that.