



Speech by

Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Hansard Wednesday, 28 October 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Wyaralong Dam

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.01 am): A significant milestone has been reached with the completion of the first stage of the Wyaralong Dam project near Beaudesert. The access road for the project is now finished and work on the first new dam in 20 years can begin. As we speak, an on-site quarry is being established to provide materials for the dam wall which will stand some 500 metres long and up to 48 metres high. The Wyaralong Dam, in conjunction with the nearby Cedar Grove Weir, will supply 21,000 million litres of water every year. That is enough water for close to 300,000 people.

The milestone highlights the Bligh government's commitment to securing South-East Queensland's water supply now and into the future. Not only is the Wyaralong Dam an important new water supply; this \$348 million project is creating real employment opportunities for long-term job seekers. The dam will create 420 construction jobs, with more than 200 workers on the job right now including about 80 locals. In addition, around 150 local businesses have been used to supply goods or services to the project.

I am also pleased to report that the first recruits from the Wyaralong Dam Green Army are marching into the workforce after graduating from a 15-week horticultural program. The Green Army is a Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative run in partnership with Civic Solutions and the Bremer Institute of TAFE. When I visited these 10 recruits in July, they were hard at work helping with important environmental work as part of the Wyaralong Dam project and learning new valuable skills for future careers in horticulture, conservation or land management. The course has proved a resounding success. Nine out of the 10 recruits are now employed. One recruit has secured what is arguably South-East Queensland's best job, working on Moreton Island as a groundskeeper at the Tangalooma Island Resort.

This is just the beginning for the Green Army, with a second team of recruits now hard at work and many more to come. If approved, it is expected that the Green Army will go to work on the Traveston Crossing Dam, providing training and strong futures for people in the region. As announced by the Treasurer, Queensland's Green Army is a \$57 million investment in our people and natural resources that will employ 3,000 Queenslanders over the next three years on projects of environmental significance.