



Speech by

Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard Wednesday, 24 March 2010

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Courthouse Building Program

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.23 am): The Bligh Labor government recognises the challenges associated with population growth. More importantly, the government is taking action to manage those challenges, particularly in relation to our courts system. For the past few years we have been delivering the courts building program, which is establishing modern facilities in areas where they are needed most. At the centrepiece of this program is one of the biggest courts capital works projects ever undertaken in Australia's history: the new \$600 million Supreme and District Courts precinct in Brisbane. As well as supporting almost 5,000 jobs during its construction phase, the completed building will deliver a courts precinct that will serve Brisbane, the south-east and the entire state well into the future. The new complex will open with 39 courts but has been designed to cater for growth and will ultimately boast 45 courts at full capacity, which is 13 more than are currently available at the existing site.

However, the Bligh government is not just catering for growth in Brisbane. Earlier this month I joined the members for Ipswich and Ipswich West to formally open the new Ipswich courthouse. This facility will serve the communities of Ipswich and the western growth corridor well into the future. While the old courthouse served the community well, population growth in the western corridor meant we had to expand to meet the future needs of the community.

Another growth area in Queensland is the Gold Coast and the Bligh government is providing better court facilities there, too. We are adding three more courtrooms to the Southport courthouse complex, taking the total number of magistrates courtrooms to 13, as part of a \$4.5 million upgrade. I thank the members for Southport, Broadwater and Burleigh for their advocacy for these improved justice resources for the Gold Coast.

Further afield, we are in the midst of a \$10 million refurbishment of the Toowoomba courthouse. Also, in the past two years we have opened new courthouses at Sandgate, Pine Rivers and Mareeba. The Bligh government is addressing the issues associated with growth and managing the impacts on our justice system.