



Speech by

## Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Hansard Tuesday, 23 February 2010

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### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

#### Northern Pipeline Interconnector

**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.21 am): I am pleased to advise the House that construction has commenced on another key component of the SEQ water grid following Commonwealth environmental approval. On 12 February, the federal government approved the \$450 million underground reverse-flow Northern Pipeline Interconnector stage 2—or NPI2—between Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast. NPI2 will link the Sunshine Coast to the South-East Queensland water grid and potential future water sources and provide further water security and jobs for South-East Queenslanders, with a total of more than 1,000 people employed, many of them locally, during the construction.

There is no doubt that water is a precious resource that has to be shared. The completed pipeline will provide the reverse-flow capacity to ensure water can flow in either direction depending on demand. It will connect the currently segmented water zones of the Sunshine Coast to the South-East Queensland water grid and provide greater flexibility of water supply—the infrastructure—to support Sunshine Coast growth. NPI2 will connect with the existing 47-kilometre NPI stage 1 between Morayfield and the Landers Shute Water Treatment Plant near Eudlo and allow for the transfer of up to 65 megalitres of water a day. The flow will be regulated by the South East Queensland Water Grid Manager.

The project has undergone three years of rigorous environmental assessment, and the Coordinator-General's report and the Commonwealth's project approval provide a suite of conditions to ensure that any potential environmental impacts from construction and operation of the pipeline are managed and mitigated. Conditions include controls on vegetation clearing, waterway crossings, air quality, noise and vibrations, traffic, erosion and waste management. Other conditions include the requirement that the proponent, LinkWater Projects, offset any greenhouse gas emissions produced during construction and replace any food source trees removed threefold. All environmental safeguards to protect fauna and flora will be undertaken in accordance with the approval conditions for the project and the approved environmental management plan.

Early work, such as clearing in areas not affected by conditions imposed by the Commonwealth government and in compliance with conditions imposed by the state government, is underway. Community and landowner consultation is ongoing in relation to construction activities. The approval for NPI2, which follows the 28 January completion of the drought-busting Toowoomba pipeline, clearly demonstrates the Bligh government's commitment to long-term water security for South-East Queensland.