



Speech by


Hon. Campbell Newman

MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Qantas Group; Newman Government, Achievements

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (2.19 pm): I want to acknowledge visitors from Buderim, which is ably represented by Minister Dickson, who are in the public gallery today. I rise today to share with the chamber some great news for tourism in Queensland. Earlier today I spoke to the Qantas Group Chief Executive Officer, Mr Alan Joyce. Mr Joyce confirmed that the Qantas Group wrote to federal tourism minister Martin Ferguson last night to advise that it is suspending its funding agreement with Tourism Australia, effective today. Instead, it will be redirecting its funding to state tourism bodies directly. This is exciting news for Queensland and I commend the Qantas Group for its decision to work directly with the states to promote tourism.

The Qantas Group invests more than any other private enterprise in Australian tourism. It will be putting more than \$50 million over the next three years on the table to promote Australia, and that money is now up for grabs. Queensland now has the opportunity to sit down with the Qantas Group to take a big chunk of that money for cooperative marketing across the Qantas and Jetstar businesses. This is a great opportunity for Queensland. It means that Tourism Queensland and Minister Jann Stuckey will now work directly with Qantas on promoting key markets for Queensland. To this end, I have today asked the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games and her department to meet with Qantas at the earliest opportunity.

Queensland and Qantas share a special and unique history. Qantas has certainly demonstrated its commitment to Queensland in the eight months since the government changed in March this year. They have restarted direct flights from Sydney to the Gold Coast after an absence of many years and are consolidating their heavy maintenance facilities in Brisbane.

The Qantas Group operates about 100,000 weekly domestic seats into Queensland airports and we are continuing to work with them to increase their presence across the state. I also note their direct flights into Gladstone. As a government we are absolutely committed to getting tourism going again in Queensland. We are already doing a number of things in this space to promote Queensland tourism, such as our \$8 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund, which has already reaped results; the allocation of \$20 million to implement our tourism investment strategy focusing on destination marketing; and more than doubling the funding available for regional tourism organisations to \$7 million. This government is committed to taking the tourism industry in this state to new levels. If the federal government is unable to manage its relationships with key industry players such as Qantas, we are very happy—we are delighted—to fill the void.

To date, our government has been focused on fixing an economic mess. We have worked hard to establish a framework for a sustainable future and to highlight opportunities for our great state. Now, as we look to the future we are starting to turn our focus to converting those opportunities into a better quality of life for all Queenslanders, with better services and better access to government. Across the state, over the next six months we will be handing power back to local communities via their councils. Not only that, we will be continuing to empower front-line staff, whether that be the nurse at the local emergency department

needing to improve patient flow, or the principal of the local school determining a discipline strategy. We will be completing work on a new school at Mackay and ambulance stations at both Emerald and Tara. There will be new ambulance officers and vehicles providing access to hospitals with reduced waiting times and new electronic patient flow management systems. We will be planning to ensure that services grow with demand, that they are provided in areas of need and that they improve quality of life for people right across our great state.

For Queenslanders with a disability, we will be commencing the Your Life Your Choice program—a five-year disability services plan. A 20-year demand map will provide families across the state with the security of schools planning, while we will work to complete fire and rescue stations at Clifton, Milla Milla, Mount Tamborine and Emerald.

We will also review the Rural Fire Service. We will launch a 30-year strategic plan for Queensland agriculture and begin work to restore agricultural colleges at Emerald and Longreach. We will make our streets safer, with the rollout of Neighbourhood Watch liaison roles at police stations across Queensland and CCTV cameras for five new locations in Townsville.

We will review legislation, including youth justice and property law. We have made our justice system more effective with the JP pilot program in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The first round of Get Going and Get Playing programs will kick into action and Get Started vouchers of up to \$150 per eligible child will assist families with the cost of kids sport.

As well as holding the state's first planning forum, we will kick off the Bowen Basin infrastructure plan and commence infrastructure projects in the first round of the Royalties for the Regions program. We will be pushing the Commonwealth to provide their share of funding to the Bruce Highway and commence a regional survey for recreational fishing.

Additional country race meetings will be announced and new boards for greyhound, thoroughbred and harness racing will be established. Red tape and unnecessary regulation will be in the firing line and we will be reviewing the integrated freight strategy, state planning, blue cards and the overregulated liquor and gaming industries.

Earlier this year the cattle industry benefited from additional weekly regional cattle train services. Winton will now have three cattle train services per week and Cloncurry, too, meaning that up to 968 extra head of cattle can be transported per service, which is the equivalent of 15 B-double heavy vehicles. The focus on regional issues, from a healthy Gladstone Harbour to sustainable water entitlements for mines on Cape York and in the Galilee Basin, will be considered alongside new regional plans for the Darling Downs and the golden triangle. Resources projects will benefit from simplified processes, whether it is reduced red tape for small scale alluvial mining or releasing land for petroleum and gas exploration areas. This will all be done in the era of open data, with more information available, better decision making and great opportunities for industry, communities and individuals across our great state. Queensland is a great state with great opportunity.