




Speech By
Hon. Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Reef Plan

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (9.46 am): The Newman government recognises the value of the environment and the importance of protecting the Great Barrier Reef. It is for this reason I am very concerned that the second report card into reef water quality protection sitting with the federal Labor government is still on the shelf. I wrote to the federal Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, the Hon. Tony Burke, earlier this month noting in the strongest terms that the final checking of this report had been completed late last year—late last year. In fact, it was agreed at a ministerial forum in December that the report card would be released as soon as possible. Yet here we are some four months later and still the federal Labor government has not released the report.

However, while the Commonwealth sits on its hands, the Newman government is acting. As I outlined previously to the House, the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection has moved quickly to work with the cattle-grazing and the sugarcane industries to put in place best management practice, or BMPs, similar to those used by the cotton and grains industries. We are delivering for the agricultural industry and for the reef, and I thank Minister McVeigh for his department's work in assisting industry in the development and implementation of the BMP program. This is something this government can do, something the opposition can only look at with envy to see firsthand the environment and the agricultural departments working together for the good of the state.

But the success of the BMP work is not this government's only success, so I table for the House a summary listing some 16 major achievements put in place by the Newman government in the last 12 months for the benefit of the Great Barrier Reef.

Tabled paper. Document titled 'The LNP's record of achievement on the Great Barrier Reef' [[2454](#)].

Let me alert the House to some of those achievements. We have committed to the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan and maintaining a \$35 million investment. We have announced the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership. We have curtailed plans for the multicargo facility at the port of Abbot Point. We have laid charges against Orica in Gladstone. We have released an expression of interest for the east coast net fishery \$9 million buyout, and we have announced those agreements, as I just said, with the cane and the grazing industries.

In summary, we are currently working towards updating the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan for adoption later this year. The absence of the report card is a major concern. It is impeding ongoing engagement on a new reef plan. I urge the federal government to release this second report card, especially since the third report card is currently being finalised. I also call on Minister Burke to commit to funding for the Great Barrier Reef—something he has not done to date. The Queensland government is committed to rectifying this situation and is insisting that the Commonwealth government commit to getting future report cards released annually by September each year. The

ongoing delays in the reef plan report cards are unacceptable, and this is not how the Newman government does business. We are now in a position where we are forced to play catch-up because of yet more Commonwealth delays. We call on the Commonwealth to stop delaying, stop pontificating and release the second report card into reef water quality protection.