




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Open Data Revolution

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (11.26 am): I rise on a matter of exciting public interest, the announcement of the impending 'Opening the Vault—Open Data in Queensland' launch which will take place on Wednesday, 3 April 2013. The very name, 'the vault', tells you the wealth of information that is held by government and the fact that it is a very rich reserve that has not been tapped into by previous governments. The open data revolution, which the Premier has made a major priority with a whole-of-government approach for open and accessible government data, is now readily available for all within the private and public sectors. This means that small and large businesses, local governments, community groups and associations and non-government organisations can access data and utilise this government information for free.

This is an enormous leap forward by the Newman led LNP government to complete openness, transparency and accountability for all data sets held by this government which are, in reality, data sets owned by the people of Queensland. The two exceptions to this commitment of all government data being made publicly available are matters of commercial-in-confidence and also matters of individual privacy. It is envisaged that all data sets, other than these two exceptions, will become available through the one data internet site.

There are many challenges involved in bringing this open data dream to total reality, but the Newman government is absolutely committed to this program to empower the business community, the social community and even the intragovernment sector to new levels of efficiency and prosperity. The biggest challenge of all with this program is the change of culture and philosophy within government administrators to change from a protective policy of facts and figures as being the prerogative of government officers' eyes only to a proactive platform of delivering as much information as possible to all public sectors so that information can be utilised to come up with better solutions and better decision making.

This priority program of the open data revolution for Queensland is one of the most exciting initiatives by any Queensland government in decades and probably since the abolition of death duties in Queensland in the Joh era which led to the economic boom for Queensland in the seventies.

The possibilities are enormous, unbounded and even unthought of as yet as to the utilisation of the government data sets by commercial and social communities. This worldwide trend of making governments more accountable and open with their information sets can only lead to more understanding and responsibility as to the increasingly difficult world of decision making for governments. This is the culmination of long hours of hard work from many people and today I would like to thank them personally. In particular, I thank the ministers involved and their departmental and ministerial staff for embracing this exciting new direction of open and accessible data that is now available from across all portfolio areas.

With the announcement in December of our data.qld.gov.au website, our beta site, on 3 April I will have the great pleasure of assisting the Premier in officially launching the open data revolution, along with the new minister for IT, Minister Walker. As of today, we have 92 data sets on the website. I am extremely pleased with how enthusiastically it has been embraced by interested industry and community participants. I am also excited about how our team has delivered on time frames, which are being achieved at each stage. We have reached a point in the project where each core departmental agency has been working on an open data strategy, with particular roadmaps for the release of data sets.

This is the beginning of an exciting new phase for the open data revolution that is a major priority for the LNP government. Queensland is leading the way in our approach, delivery, accessibility and dissemination of government raw data and departmental information. This approach has placed access to state government data in Queensland on a level that has never ever been attempted in the past and we hope to join other world leaders in this open data area of governance. Since being appointed to this position, I have spoken with many stakeholders in the IT and business industry and the response has been overwhelmingly supportive. Industry participants want to be involved with the new direction this government is moving in to achieve open, transparent, accessible, useable and appropriate data that can be utilised not only for the business sector and commercial development but also by community and non-government organisations.