




Speech By
Hon. Curtis Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Budget, Jobs

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.10 pm): Yesterday's budget is a jobs now and jobs for the future budget, delivering a suite of employment policies under our \$1.6 billion Working Queensland plan. It is also a budget that delivers over \$10 billion in capital investment, supporting 27½ thousand direct jobs.

Our Working Queensland jobs plan will focus on skills, training and innovative industries to promote jobs growth and investment. It has five key priorities: skills and training; enhancing business productivity; boosting government services; fostering emerging and innovative industries; and, of course, growing our regions. In addition to the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative, which was axed under the former government, the budget also delivers an extra \$34.5 million to restore TAFE as our pre-eminent vocational education and training provider.

I am proud to be a Treasurer from regional Queensland. During the election we promised that the Building Our Regions fund would commence from 2016-17. However, in light of the need for jobs-generating infrastructure projects to help economic uplift in Queensland sooner, the budget outlines that this has been brought forward by a full year, to commence in 2015-16. Over the next two years, local councils and local projects in rural and regional Queensland will share in an additional \$200 million in infrastructure brought forward through the Building Our Regions fund.

From our regional centres to the outback, the budget recognises that some parts of Queensland are doing it particularly tough. That is why we are providing \$52 million of drought relief in this budget, including emergency rebates and freight subsidies. In the north-west and south-west of our state we will be delivering \$40 million for a Western Roads Upgrade Program to improve roads and keep road crews on the job.

Businesses need certainty regarding a pipeline of future projects. That is exactly what we are delivering on a number of fronts. We recognise that there are times when economic uplift is required in order to deliver jobs. In a decentralised state like Queensland, government building projects do help to deliver employment when and where it is most needed. That is why the budget includes a \$500 million injection in Queensland's local schools and hospitals—to enable the delivery of important refurbishment and maintenance projects. The new Statewide Schools and Hospitals Fund will provide an economic uplift to local communities with a focus on health refurbishment and education capital and maintenance projects. By giving Queenslanders access to well-maintained and modern facilities we can ensure our state continues to grow and prosper. More importantly, the Statewide Schools and Hospitals Fund will deliver new health and education projects and generate local jobs and new investment in our economy. This is a sound investment in our kids and in our future.

This is a budget about both building infrastructure and catalysing infrastructure. We are introducing a streamlined assessment process to encourage infrastructure investment and development. The Palaszczuk government is focused on infrastructure delivery, which is why we want to harness the knowledge and expertise of the private sector as best we can. We are making it easier for the private sector to submit proposals which can capture economic uplift and job opportunities. We want Queensland to lead the nation in working with the private sector to implement innovative financial arrangements which can deliver infrastructure, new projects and ultimately more jobs.