




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Wild Dog Fencing

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (10.14 am): I have good news for Western Queensland. Today I can announce another key part of my government's ongoing, firm commitment to revive the sheep and wool industry in Western Queensland by tackling the scourge of wild dogs. I can today announce that an \$18 million scheme, to be funded through a one-off Queensland Treasury Corporation loan to the Longreach Regional Council, will see another 900,000 hectares of productive grazing land fenced off. I am sure the member for Gregory will welcome this announcement. This represents around 22 per cent of the Longreach region protected from wild dog attacks. The loan covers the cost of rolling out a massive 2,500 kilometres of exclusion fencing. Sixty-three ratepayers in the Longreach region will get their land wild dog proofed. The council will charge the ratepayer, due to the nature of the special benefit created for them.

I thank Longreach Regional Council Mayor Ed Warren for the bold thinking behind this scheme. Mayor Warren said it will be a game-changer and it will revitalise the economic prosperity of the central west. Over the next five years, as the dog-proof fencing rolls out, sheep numbers should increase by 200,000—up by 40 per cent. With sheep come shearers and more economic activity in the towns in Western Queensland. The Longreach Regional Council estimates an increase of 130 new jobs in the region, along with a potential population boost of around 500 people related to the job increases.

In January I visited the central west and met with graziers. In early May I once again met with them and told them that we were going to build fences. We do not need a wall, but we certainly need a barrier. I told graziers we would build more fences to protect productive sheep country from the wild dog menace. In May I committed an extra \$5 million for this initiative. With existing state funding, and now the QTC loan, we can protect more sheep and return the industry in this state to what it once was. I am advised that a total of 5,300 kilometres of fencing could be erected with our support. To give honourable members some perspective, this is longer than our Great Barrier Reef and longer again than the border between the United States and Mexico.

In terms of our wild dog fencing program, the guidelines have now been finalised by the oversight group. This group, with the input of our wild dog commissioners Vaughan Johnson and Mark O'Brien, will ensure funding is delivered where it is most needed. The new grants for this expanded wild dog cluster fencing program will be committed by the government before Christmas—a great Christmas present for Western Queensland. For the benefit of members, I table a photo that wild dog fencing commissioner Vaughan Johnson sent me earlier this month. It shows a truck carrying 220 bales of wool worth around \$330,000 from the Tambo region. As Vaughan said, the photo is living proof our wild dog fencing program is indeed working.

Tabled paper: Photograph, undated, depicting truck transporting hay bales [\[2219\]](#).