




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MACKAY

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Port of Mackay

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (12.17 pm): Mackay has always been a port town. In fact, the port of Mackay has been ingrained into our local history as have our cane fields and cyclones. Last week, I visited the port to see the \$1.26 million upgrade of wharf 1. The Palaszczuk government's funded upgrade of wharf 1 will further improve the world-class facilities of the port of Mackay.

Wharf 1, which is used primarily for fuel and general cargo imports, was built in 1970 and has borne the brunt of storms, cyclones and tides while playing a pivotal role in the operation of the port. In line with the commitment of North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation to sustainability, the upgrade of the wharf will ensure the longevity of this vital asset. The upgrade of the wharf involves fitting 330 purpose designed jackets for each of the wharf's 330 steel poles, creating 10 full-time jobs. These jackets are designed from three-millimetre heavy-duty plastic and are fitted and tightened over marine piling tape. The jackets form a protective barrier system to shield the poles from the harsh marine environment.

In a first-of-its-kind project, the port of Mackay has a temporary floating pontoon, built from more than 500 plastic blocks. This pontoon has been connected and placed underneath the wharf, allowing easier access to the piles. A local Mackay company, Giles Contractors, which was awarded the \$1.6 million contract, suggested the floating pontoon option as an alternative to more traditional methods, such as scaffolding. The floating pontoon is a great example of where innovation and ideas have been implemented to provide a safer and more effective way of doing business. The pontoon epitomises the state government's and North Queensland Bulk Ports' drive towards innovation.

Last week also marked the completion of another port project, the \$3 million upgrade of the northern breakwater, with work set to begin on the middle breakwater, another \$3 million, in the near future. Both of these projects are being undertaken by a local contracting company owned by the Dunwoody family, proudly Mackay based and proudly providing much needed jobs for our locals. These projects are a wonderful example of the state government working with our government owned corporations on infrastructure projects that employ local people and that will benefit Mackay now and into the future.

As part of the Palaszczuk government's Accelerated Works Program, we are bringing forward 184 projects with a total value of \$461 million and supporting an estimated 961 jobs. This is a clear commitment by this government to generate jobs right across Queensland. In the area of port construction in the Mackay region that the Palaszczuk government is fast-tracking, there are the following key infrastructure upgrades: \$2.5 million for the port of Hay Point material off-loading facility

upgrade; \$1.1 million for the Mackay Harbour Road East upgrade of intersection and port road; \$8.5 million for the Mackay port wharf 4 and 5 fender and wharf upgrade; and \$.4 million for the Mackay port navigation lights upgrade. In the Mackay region, projects in excess of \$60 million are being accelerated to support more than 120 full-time-equivalent jobs.

Four road infrastructure projects in the Mackay and the wider Mackay region are being brought forward under the Accelerated Works Program to sustain more jobs sooner. These include: \$28 million for the Vines Creek bridges upgrade; \$3 million for the Bruce Highway-Thomsetts Road overtaking lanes; and \$5.15 million for the Bruce Highway-Carlton Road intersection upgrade.

I am pleased to advise that the planning for the Vines Creek bridges has advanced, including consultation with the council, Ergon and Telstra about the relocation of their services, a necessary step before construction can start. Relocation of electrical services is on track and has commenced this week. It is also important that the design of the bridges be incorporated into the council's design for their flood levy. I am pleased to confirm that the completion of the design for the bridges has been brought forward from April 2017 to November 2016, with construction on track and ready to commence in April 2017. The Palaszczuk government is supporting jobs now and for the future.