




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

Record of Proceedings, 24 August 2017

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Queensland Indigenous Procurement Policy

 **Hon. M FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.10 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to growing the economy and creating jobs, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not participate equally in the labour market. The unemployment rate for Indigenous Queenslanders is 18 per cent—three times—higher than the rate for non-Indigenous Queenslanders. That is why increasing economic participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is a clear objective of the Palaszczuk government.

I am pleased to say that a new whole-of-government initiative has been launched to support the growth and development of Indigenous businesses and employment. The Queensland Indigenous Procurement Policy aims to increase the value of government contracts that are awarded to Indigenous businesses, support the Indigenous business sector and boost jobs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. Under our new policy, we will require that by the year 2022 three per cent of what is spent on Queensland government contracts is awarded to Indigenous businesses. We know that this is achievable, and we are working across government to not only meet the target but also harness the growth we have seen in the Indigenous sector to beat it.

Through this initiative the Palaszczuk government will increase the proportion of the total spend on goods and services supplied by Indigenous businesses; support and link Indigenous businesses in the Queensland government supply chain; and support non-Indigenous businesses to increase their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce when supplying to the Queensland government. Following on from the Buy Queensland initiative, the new Queensland Indigenous Procurement policy will change how government partners with Indigenous businesses to obtain goods, services, capital works and infrastructure. This initiative will create or support viable employment options within Indigenous communities because we know that Indigenous businesses are significantly more likely to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our new procurement policy is backing Queensland jobs. It is about levelling the playing field to ensure that local businesses—particularly Indigenous businesses—can get a fair share of government procurement. My department is working to undertake a range of implementation activities to support this wonderful policy, which will commence on 1 September. I look forward to discussing our new policy further and exploring more ways Indigenous businesses can thrive at our Investing Together Forum in Townsville next week.