




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2017

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (10.46 pm): I rise to speak to the 2017-18 budget handed down by the Treasurer this week. Members have heard many times the members for Mundingburra and Thuringowa and me speak about the many outstanding achievements the Palaszczuk government has delivered in Townsville over the past 2½ years. More specifically, I wish today to highlight what the Palaszczuk government is doing for the electorate of Townsville, which is supported significantly by the budget announcements this week. The people of Townsville have very high expectations of the Palaszczuk government in this budget. I can assure them that their expectations have been met and exceeded.

There has been no secret about the desperate need for a long-term water solution for our growing city. When the Premier signed the first ever city deals with the mayor of Townsville and the federal government, it created an opportunity for all three levels of government to come together, regardless of their political persuasion, and commit to a 15-year plan for the city.

When the Treasurer handed down the budget on Tuesday of this week, a resounding commitment was made by the Palaszczuk government to the people of Townsville. The Premier said that she had heard what the mums and dads and the people on the streets and down on The Strand had said to her around Townsville's needs for a long-term water solution. They have been saying this for the past 30 years. The Premier has delivered this much needed solution by putting \$225 million on the table. This \$225 million is more than a game-changer for Townsville. It is a visionary step in creating Townsville as the capital of north Australia. This \$225 million for water infrastructure opens opportunity for industry and business as the powerhouse of the north. Like the Burdekin Falls Dam, built by a Labor government, did in the 1980s—it opened large farming areas and agricultural land—this \$225 million commitment by the Labor state government to water infrastructure will unlock the next level of opportunity in North Queensland.

The infrastructure spend by the Palaszczuk government extends beyond the \$225 million for water infrastructure. It includes \$75 million for widening of the Platypus Channel for the port of Townsville. I will recap just how much money has been committed to the Port of Townsville by the Palaszczuk government: \$110 million for the upgrade of berth 4 to convert it to a fully operating containerisation berth; \$55 million for pylon encapsulation to make it safe for the berths; and now \$75 million for widening of the channel. For those in the House who have not been calculating the investments made by the Palaszczuk government into the port, it totals \$225 million.

It seems that \$225 million is the magic number for the Premier when it comes to Townsville—\$225 million for water infrastructure and \$225 million for the port redevelopment. Why is \$225 million committed by the Palaszczuk government into the Townsville port? Because we own it! The former Newman government under the direct recommendation of then treasurer Tim Nicholls wanted to sell the Port of Townsville to the highest bidder. Chinese, Indian or USA ownership of the largest commercial port in north Australia would have made the people of Townsville see red, and they did. The investment

of \$75 million to widen the channel will encourage larger container ships to stop at Townsville and unload rather than bypassing us and sailing on to Brisbane to unload, therefore putting containers on the back of trucks and road freighting them up to Townsville. That will mean cheaper consumer prices for mums and dads, and that is a great thing for us. The Port of Townsville needs to expand as exports to international ports are growing at an exponential rate.

Townsville is located closer to Singapore and several other of our Asian trading partners. The business case is being done to relocate the rail line to the port and increase its capacity. The state development area will then ideally be activated as a back end of port warehouse distribution centre. When these long-term projects are achieved, the Port of Townsville will become a vibrant north Australia and international transport warehouse and distribution hub.

Schools in my electorate have also been rewarded in the budget. Bwngcolman Community School on Palm Island will receive half a million dollars for upgrades to its science block through the School Infrastructure Enhancement Program as well as \$325,000 for the school's D block through the same funding program. It was celebrations all round at Townsville State High School's P&C meeting on Tuesday night. It was your regular P&C meeting, but there were celebrations when I rang principal Rob Slater to give him the great news that \$500,000 had been attributed to the school hall improvements. These hall improvements will stop pigeons and possums calling the building home but, more importantly from my experience, it will prevent possums procreating during school assemblies in full view of 700 students.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr STEWART: It is difficult when 700 students view those sorts of things happening, and that will stop it now. I indeed welcome the announcement and thank the Minister for Education. As already acknowledged by the member for Hinchinbrook, the Townsville Stadium is an outstanding infrastructure project where the Premier has committed \$140 million to a project that will, according to managing contractor Watpac, create over 2,000 jobs. Construction will kick off on the jewel in the crown of North Queensland in the coming months and it will be ready to welcome the North Queensland Cowboys on to the grounds ready to beat the Broncos yet again. Madam Deputy Speaker Farmer, I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Mr Speaker, the following details outline the Palaszczuk Government's commitment to Townsville:

- \$46.1 million in 2017-18 to commence construction of a sports stadium in Townsville, worth \$250 million.
- \$10.0 million in 2017-18, as part of a \$30.0 million over four years commitment, to deliver urgently needed fisheries reform, improve sustainability of Queensland Fisheries, ensure jobs are maintained and deliver a more modern, responsive and consultative approach to fisheries management. This will include 20 more frontline compliance officers, including three in Townsville.
- \$5.0 million in 2017-18 to commence redevelopment of the Townsville Hospital to increase clinical service capacity and patient flows to meet current and future service demands worth \$10.4 million.
- \$1.6 million in 2017-18 for the relocation of the Townsville Hospital breast screen clinic to a more appropriate site to improve patient flow.
- \$249,000 in 2017-18, as part of a \$532,000 commitment over two years, to provide additional prosecutorial staff to support the Specialist High Risk Youth Court in Townsville.
- Grant funding of \$10,000, as part of a \$50,000 commitment, provided to Campbell Scientific Australia Pty Ltd towards the development of water management sensors.
- Grant funding of \$9,120 as part of a \$45,600 commitment over 1 year provided to Be Psyched towards the development of an integrated online platform for health professionals.
- Grant funding of \$4,800, as part of a \$24,000 commitment, provided to SeaLink Queensland Pty Ltd towards the development of a North Queensland Tourism Knowledge Cluster strategy.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet

- Grant funding is a \$20,000 commitment over a five month period to produce interpretative signage, commemorating the US soldiers based at the Catalina airbase and the role played by Palm Island and its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inhabitants during the Second World War.
- \$830,000 in 2017-18, as part of a \$3.3 million commitment over four years, to provide funding to Queensland based arts and cultural organisations to deliver arts and cultural activities for the benefit of Queensland.

Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning

- \$1.0 million, as part of a \$2.5 million commitment over two years, to undertake streetscaping works.

Economic Development Queensland

- \$4.5 million in 2017-18 to commence construction of aircraft parking aprons to support commercial operations accommodate growth of the specialist aviation industrial activities at Townsville Airport, worth \$9.0 million.
- \$7.0 million in 2017-18 to commence rejuvenation a 1.5 kilometre stretch of the Ross Creek frontage, involving the construction of a continuous pedestrian and cycle pathway link through to the centre of Townsville's CBD, worth \$14.0 million.

Queensland Reconstruction Authority

- An estimated \$474,000 in 2017/18 will be provided to Local Government Authorities fully or partly within Townsville Electorate for recovery and reconstruction projects in partnership with the Australian Government.

Health

- \$7.7 million for completion of the Palm Island Primary Health Care Centre including an Adult Clinic, Maternal and Child Health Clinic and a Social and Emotional Wellbeing Clinic for the Palm Island community, worth in total \$8.5 million.
- \$8.6 million in 2017-18 to complete the redevelopment of the Townsville Hospital, including Stage 3 and 4 works to refurbish and expand the Central Sterilising and Supply Department and build a new clinical education and administration space, worth \$334 million.
- \$2.6 million in 2017-18 to complete the fitout and refurbishment of the existing Paediatrics ward at Townsville Hospital worth \$6.6 million.
- \$221,274 in 2017-18 for an additional single bed bone marrow transplant rooms in Oncology to improve infection control and patient safety at Townsville Hospital, at a total cost of \$1.6 million.
- Grant funding of \$ 94,741 in 2017-18 to provide alcohol and other drug outclient treatment services.
- Grant funding of \$1.7 million, as part of a \$3.5 million commitment over two years, to provide health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Grant funding of \$1.3 million, as part of a \$4.0 million commitment over three years, to provide non-clinical support services to people with mental illness, their carers and families.
- Grant funding of \$158,786, as part of a \$793,930 commitment over five years, to provide management of environmental issues that impact on health in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Department of State Development

- \$410,993 as part of a \$215.4 million commitment from the Building our Regions program, to survey, repair and replace water supply, sewerage and power connections to the Palm Island sporting precinct's facilities.

Department of Energy and Water Supply

- \$1.9 million in 2017-18, out of a \$2.1 million total spend, for end-of-life and safety replacements of obsolete underground cable terminations.
- \$20.6 million in 2017-18, out of a \$42.5 million total spend, for the second stage of the redevelopment at the Garbutt Depot in Townsville.
- \$982,000 in 2017-18, out of a \$15.6 million total spend, to upgrade the Palm Island Power Station.

Environment and Heritage Protection

- \$550,000 to undertake research into flying fox behaviours and roost management
- \$75,524 for Everyone's Environment Grant program, as part of a \$12 million commitment over 5 years to implement real and practical actions to clean up environmental and to work with communities to tackle environmental degradation in their areas. Funding will seek to build resilience to help the environment to withstand future weather events.
- \$50,000 as part of a \$150,000 agreement over 3 years to support the operational expenses of Queensland Conservation Council and regional conservation groups.

National Parks, Sport and Racing

- \$223,691 to complete a \$699,382 project to deliver the replacement of a current National Parks Field Management Program funded vessel.

Science, Information Technology and Innovation

- Grant funding is \$48,793 as part of a \$97,585 commitment over 1 year provided to Space Counts Pty Ltd towards an innovative idea: Space Counts.
- \$17,000 to support the operations of the Palm Island Indigenous Knowledge Centre.
- \$7,400 in 2017-18 for training programs for people on Palm Island to increase their skills and knowledge on digital devices.
- \$869,182 in ongoing funding to ensure the adequate supply of library resources to public libraries throughout Queensland to benefit the electorates of Thuringowa, Townsville and Mundingburra.
- Grant funding is \$161,180 in 2017-18, as part of a \$644,720 commitment over four years, provided to public libraries providing services to the electorates of Thuringowa, Townsville and Mundingburra to support parents in their (0-5) child's emergent literacy development.

Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

- \$598,036 in 2017-18 to assist persons under 65 or an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person aged under 50, with a disability.
- \$605,208 in 2017-18, as part of a \$2,420,832 commitment over four years, to provide support for older people to help maintain and strengthen their connections to community.
- \$488,683 in 2017-18 to provide information, linkage and capacity building for people with a disability.
- \$5.1 million in 2017-18, as part of a \$20.2 million commitment over four years, to provide out-of-home care placement services to ensure children and young people in need of protection are supported and safe.
- \$1.9 million in 2017-18, as part of a \$7.4 million commitment over four years, to provide child protection support services that help support children and families meet case plan goals.

- \$266,115 in 2017-18, as part of a \$1,064,462 commitment over four years, to provide domestic and family violence services to improve the safety and wellbeing of victims and their children, particularly those in high risk situations.
- \$8.9 million in 2017-18, as part of a \$35.6 million commitment over four years, to provide family support services to work with vulnerable families to help improve parenting skills and give parents the support they need to prevent problems from escalating to crisis point.
- \$1.5 million in 2017-18, as part of a \$6.1 million commitment over four years, to provide domestic and family violence services to improve the safety and wellbeing of victims and their children, particularly those in high risk situations.
- \$5.4 million in 2017-18, as part of a \$21.5 million commitment over four years, to provide support to vulnerable individuals and assist them to get their lives back on track.
- \$115,374 in 2017-18, as part of a \$461,494 commitment over four years, to provide programs to increase the ability for individuals and community groups to participate positively in their community.
- \$2.0 million as part of a \$7.9 million commitment over four years, to provide support to vulnerable women to keep them safe and connected in their communities.
- \$839,194 in 2017-18, as part of a \$3.4 million commitment over four years, to provide support for young people at risk of disconnection, focusing service delivery efforts on building their connections to their families and the community.

Housing and Public Works

- \$16.2 million in 2017-18 to complete 36 dwellings in Palm Island
- \$1.2 million in 2017-18 to commence and complete two dwellings in Palm Island
- \$1.0 million in 2017-18 to provide transitional housing to eligible applicants with very high or high needs.
- \$18,000 in 2017-18 for grant funding to registered housing providers to deliver crisis accommodation to eligible persons by leasing properties from the private rental market.
- \$3.0 million in 2017-18 to improve social housing
- \$3,400,000 in 2017-18 to upgrade properties to the Social Housing standard
- \$577,000 in 2017-18 to provide Home Assist Secure services
- \$11.3 million in funding for non-government organisations to deliver specialist homelessness services aimed at both reducing the number of homeless people and the number of people becoming homeless in Queensland by assisting people to: obtain housing, maintain their housing and maximising their capacity to be independent, self-reliant and connected to appropriate social and community supports.
- \$1.8 million in 2017-18 to purchase 12 replacement dwellings in Townsville.
- \$6.0 million in 2017-18 to complete construction of 54 units of accommodation in Townsville.
- \$161,000 in 2017-18 to relieve overcrowding through building extensions to 40 year lease properties under Rural and Remote Funding.

National Parks, Sport and Racing

- \$34,612 in 2017-18, as part of a \$173,060 commitment, to increase participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on Palm Island in structured sport and active recreation activities in each community.
- \$33,137 in 2017-18, as part of a \$165,685 commitment, to increase participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Townsville in structured sport and active recreation activities in each community.
- \$825,000 in 2017-18, as part of a \$3.3 million commitment, to implement various capital work projects at the Townsville Sports Reserve Precinct to continue improving sports facilities.
- \$220,000 in 2017-18, as part of a \$400,000 commitment, to re-develop the Palm Island Sports precinct, including clubhouse facilities and netball and basketball facilities.

Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning

- \$2.5 million in 2017-18 to continue upgrades to the wastewater infrastructure at Palm Island, worth \$5.5 million.
- \$942,556 in 2017-18, as part of a \$1.3 million commitment over two years, to excavate, sort and remove all waste items at the current waste disposal facility (Mandarra Road, Palm Island) in order to close/rehabilitate the current site.
- \$865,356 in 2017-18, as part of a \$1.8 million commitment over two years, to upgrade footpaths in the Townsville CBD to improve community safety.

Transport and Main Roads

- \$14.4 million in 2017-18, as part of a \$37.3 million commitment, for the redevelopment of the Port of Townsville Berth 4 facility, including alignment with adjacent berth and deck surface works.
- \$1 million in 2017-18 for the realignment and rehabilitation of sections of the road network in the port to facilitate trade.

Statewide Initiatives

- \$55.1 million statewide to roll out domestic and family violence specialist court, for civil matters, including Townsville with circuit to Palm Island, expansion of Magistrate Courts facilities and additional prosecutors, legal aid, support services and training. I commend the bill to the House.