




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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ADJOURNMENT

Townsville, Water Security

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (11.47 pm): I rise this evening to talk about the Palaszczuk government's commitment of \$225 million to Townsville for water security solutions. Townsville has not had a good wet season for four years. That has had an impact throughout the city. We are on level 3 water restrictions. The Premier announced in the budget this year there was \$225 million to solve our water security problem. That means a long-term solution, not just a bandaid solution. This will be a solution that will last us for up to 100 years.

The water task force was commissioned under the Townsville City Deals. It was chaired by independent chair Mr Brad Webb, who is a well-known identity throughout Townsville and a well-respected businessman. He was charged with developing short-term, mid-term and long-term water solutions and water security for Townsville. He was also asked as part of his charter to present a solution by the end of the financial year. The task force carried out extensive community consultation and commissioned a range of engineering and technical analyses, the main issue being the need for a clear plan to meet future growth in water demand given a projected population of around about 300,000 people. That is an extra 100,000 people in the next 20 years. By 2035 Townsville is expected to have 300,000 people. We need to make sure we have water for that population.

Some of the issues were water uncertainty leading to adverse economic and social impacts, water affordability and suitable pricing to accommodate the dry tropics that we live in, particularly given that we have only had small amounts of rain this year. The water task force also looked at concerns around efficient water use and long-term regional water source reliability.

The task force presented its interim report on 30 June with several recommendations including building an additional 1,800-millimetre steel pipe and installing additional pumps of 235 megalitres per day capacity from the Haughton pump station to the Ross River Dam, the Townsville City Council to also initiate and implement a water wise program and review and adjust as appropriate the existing water tariff scheme to make water more affordable and specific to the needs of the individual user.

I pass on my thanks to Mr Brad Webb and all on the water task force committee for their outstanding job and also for the work that they have done in putting together this particular report. The report reflects our procurement policy of local jobs for Queenslanders. That is great news for Townsville.