




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Keppel Electorate, Jobs

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.30 pm): Adani needs to stack up environmentally and financially. That is a matter for them. We want to see those jobs, and it is time for Adani to deliver them.

What I am here today to speak about is jobs in my electorate and how the Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering jobs in Central Queensland. The 42nd Battalion Memorial Pool in North Rockhampton is one of our most important community assets. It is a hive of activity, with young local children learning to swim, swimming squads, triathletes training, Austswim and lifeguard courses, weekly water polo games, which are very popular, and new mums and their babies bonding in the water.

Pool operators Val and Joy do an amazing job running the north side pool, teaching our children and local people to swim. I know that they were incredibly pleased to see it brought back to life again 12 months ago with upgraded facilities, new pumps, a new disability access ramp into the pool and a new wet deck as a result of funding from the Rockhampton Regional Council in partnership with the Palaszczuk government.

A few months ago, three new awesome 10-metre-high water slides were opened at the pool thanks to the Palaszczuk government's \$600 million Works for Queensland program. Local children all over Rocky have been telling me just how amazing the new slides are. Many told me about the great time they had at the pool over the Christmas break. Their feedback makes me so proud to be part of a government that invests in community infrastructure.

The Works for Queensland program supports regional councils to undertake job-creating maintenance and minor infrastructure projects. More than 600 projects have been approved across Queensland. Councils estimate the works will support, sustain or create over 8,000 jobs in regional Queensland.

This is a program that mayors across Queensland are absolutely raving about. Mayor Ludwig of the Livingstone Shire Council has told me about how wonderful Works for Queensland is because it is helping council deliver important job-generating infrastructure projects. Rockhampton Regional Council Mayor Margaret Strelow publicly praised the program at a forum in Rockhampton just last Friday, saying that it injects funding into shovel-ready local projects and, as a result, is supporting local jobs and is growing our local economy.

The availability of secure, fairly paid jobs is central to the wellbeing and future of every Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering a growing economy that delivers a better quality of living for Queenslanders. Since the 2015 election the Palaszczuk government has worked with business and industry to create 143,400 jobs in Queensland. That equates to 4,200 jobs being created each month, or more than 140 every single day.

The Palaszczuk government's Works for Queensland program is about growing jobs and stimulating our local economy, especially in Central Queensland. The program has already supported over 925 jobs, which is well in excess of the 816 jobs estimated by local government that the program forecast to generate. The funding that Works for Queensland injects into job-generating projects has been a huge boost for the local economy, and there are many more jobs to come. I have met dozens of people who have secured work through this innovative program. Works for Queensland certainly changes lives in our local community.

Works for Queensland has pumped \$48 million into over 150 approved local government projects in Central Queensland, which is transforming our community. Statewide, local governments are reporting a total of almost 8½ thousand jobs being supported through Works for Queensland, but this number is set to grow. This program supports critical community infrastructure projects and it has kickstarted local jobs in our community.

That is compared to the Newman government that utterly failed our hardworking councils with only \$104 million in local government grants in their last budget—just a third of our \$297 million investment in local government infrastructure in 2017-18, not to mention the \$200 million Works for Queensland allocation in 2017-18 as well. The Palaszczuk government is delivering more jobs, more infrastructure and more funding for regional Queensland.

Through round 1 local Central Queensland councils have completed projects including the Mount Morgan streetscape renewal, the new slides at the 42nd Battalion Memorial Pool, new boating facilities for fishing tourism at North Rockhampton boat ramp, stage 1 of the Yeppoon Homemaker Centre and improvements to road safety at Taranganba State School.

The second \$200 million round of Works for Queensland grants was rolled out in late 2017, with local governments already commencing projects. I called on Livingstone Shire Council last year to allocate funding from Works for Queensland to finally seal Svendsen Road, which provides access to the popular Coorooman Creek boat ramp. I am very pleased that council has agreed to my request and will be sealing the busy road with the second round of Works for Queensland funding.

The Works for Queensland program is unashamedly a program about growing jobs in our local economy. This is about jobs. This is what Queenslanders want to hear about. They want to hear about our government's plan for jobs, and that is what we are delivering. My No. 1 priority is growing jobs in Keppel and growing our local economy. That is why I am proud that a program like Works for Queensland is delivering exactly what we said we would do.