



Speech By  
**Barry O'Rourke**


**MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Rookwood Weir**

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.09 pm): The Palaszczuk government understands that Rookwood Weir is important to Central Queensland for jobs and future water security and agricultural growth. This project will create in excess of 100 jobs during construction. It will open up agricultural land that could be used for large-scale cropping or feedlots and lots of other options.

That is why we are getting on with the job of delivering Rookwood Weir. As at the end of July, \$66 million of state funds have been provided to SunWater. SunWater has used these funds to progress works, including securing necessary approvals, accessing land, road upgrades, setting up the gateway for local businesses to bid on contracts as they become available and developing a marketing plan for the sale of water. SunWater also held industry briefings for interested contractors in Brisbane on 30 September and has invited expressions of interest for the main works. Yesterday there was a briefing in Rockhampton regarding supplies and services for the weir which 80-odd local businesses attended.

Before we can even commence the construction of Rookwood Weir there are roadworks required, like the upgrade to the Capricorn Highway and Gogango intersection, which is now out for tender, to ensure the safety of road users with heavy trucks turning in and out of the site during construction. The same goes for the upgrade of Thirsty Creek Road. In places it needs bitumen laid and the road widened. I am delighted that the Rockhampton Regional Council will be delivering this \$7.5 million upgrade to Thirsty Creek Road, providing jobs for the people of Rockhampton.

The state government is getting on with the job of building the weir, despite Canberra's attempts to play politics. Sometimes we wonder what the federal LNP is thinking. I am really concerned that they are laying the groundwork to pull the project completely. We know that the federal government is determined to have a budget surplus no matter what damage it causes. I cannot believe they have betrayed many of Australia's most vulnerable by underfunding the aged-care system or saving \$4.6 billion in the NDIS space. I am worried they are going to betray the people of Central Queensland in the same way. The state government is getting on with the job of building Rookwood Weir while the federal LNP does nothing but complain. Do they want jobs for Central Queensland or not?