



Speech By  
**Barry O'Rourke**


**MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

**Rookwood Weir**

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (9.41 pm): The Hon. Glenn Butcher, the Minister for Water, and I visited Queensland's largest water infrastructure project, Rookwood Weir, last week. The weir is starting to rise out of the mighty Fitzroy River, with the first concrete pour for the foundations starting during the week. This major construction project worth \$367.2 million will unlock thousands of megalitres of water to increase water security for the region, expand irrigated agricultural production and create employment and provide economic opportunities.

This is no bathtub, as the member for Capricornia has previously said. It is approximately 86,000 megalitres of water and will underpin agricultural growth. This is equivalent to 34,400 Olympic swimming pools, just to give members an idea how big this is. Rookwood Weir will be an absolute game changer for the region, increasing the expansion of irrigated agricultural production and opening up new business opportunities. The land around the area has generally been used for running cattle, but with guaranteed water there will be endless opportunities.

There are currently 196 workers on site building the weir, 128 of whom are Central Queenslanders, with 14 apprentices and trainees. As a result of the Queensland government's procurement policies, we will see 95 per cent of production costs being spent in Queensland. The project team has been working hard to keep the construction time line following a two-week shutdown last month after a contractor who visited the site tested positive for COVID-19.

Some of the interesting things are that the concrete pours take place at night for temperature control. It is a continuous operation over 11-hour night shifts and will take about 12 months. The weir wall is about six storeys high and approximately 250 metres long. Other works for the project which commenced earlier this year have also advanced significantly after having moved 800,000 cubic metres of soil and rock, while a coffer dam, which will help divert river water flows, and a temporary river crossing are constructed. With the approaching wet season, these activities will help enable works to continue when the river heights rise. This is about building our agricultural industry and the flow-on into manufacturing and jobs it will create.