




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Regional Queensland, Economic Development

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (10.21 am): One of the Palaszczuk government's key economic priorities is to grow Queensland's regions. We are committed to backing our regions by attracting people, talent and investment and by driving sustainable economic prosperity. There is no better example of what regional Queensland can deliver than Wagner Corporation's Wellcamp Airport and Business Park. Last week I had the opportunity to mark the start of construction on a new recycling facility at Wellcamp, supported by our government's Resource Recovery Industry Development Program.

Recycling company Environex is building a plant that will create new life for discarded plastic, particularly from the agricultural industry. The Environex plant will convert this material that would otherwise go to landfill into a product that can be used instead of concrete for landscaping, a product that is itself recyclable at the end of its productive life. Environex's CEO is so taken with what Toowoomba and the Downs have to offer that she has relocated her life to Toowoomba from Tasmania. Why would you not want to come to Queensland! Our \$1.3 million investment will help create 30 new jobs in Toowoomba and keep nearly 8,000 tonnes of waste out of landfill each year.

Along with the Deputy Premier, I also had the opportunity to view progress on another exciting project underway at Wellcamp—the Regional Trade Distribution Centre—supported by the Palaszczuk Labor government. Our \$10 million investment into this facility will supercharge airfreight access for our primary producers and exporters. This project is supporting 170 construction jobs and is expected to be completed by the end of the year. If the federal government can ever sort out its much delayed plan for inland rail, Wellcamp will be Australia's only true trimodal freight terminal, linking rail, road and air.

International markets love Queensland's high-quality food, fibre and manufactured products, and we are making it easier to get those products to them faster and fresher. I am talking about our world-class beef from the Western Downs, pork and nuts from the South Burnett, and fruit and vegetables from the Lockyer Valley. One in five Queensland jobs is supported by exports. By creating better, faster access to markets that are home to billions of potential customers, we can increase our exports further and create even more jobs. These are jobs on farm, at processing facilities and through the supply and distribution chains—all benefiting those regional communities where people live and work.

As we work to unite and recover, our government will continue to be tireless in its efforts to support investment that creates jobs and sustainable economic development. These two projects are great examples of our commitment to investing in a better future for all Queenslanders, particularly those Queenslanders in regional parts of our state.