




Speech By
Hon. Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 25 March 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Manufacturing Hubs Grant Program

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (10.05 am): I am delighted to announce today that three more North Queensland companies have been supported through the Palaszczuk government's Manufacturing Hubs Grant Program. These companies will each receive a share in more than \$745,000 to adopt leading-edge technology and processes, boost regional business and create job opportunities.

Through the program, Ingham manufacturer LiquaForce will receive \$128,509 to improve their enterprise planning and Internet of Things effectiveness, helping their business to grow. LiquaForce, a first-class regional liquid fertiliser business, has developed a strategy over the next five years to construct and commission three new liquid fertiliser factories in Mackay, Ayr and Far North Queensland. With our support, LiquaForce will be able to build its manufacturing capability, service its customers and increase its production along the Queensland coast while remaining profitable, sustainable and in regional Queensland.

The project is expected to create 40 new high-tech jobs across the region, 14 of which have already been hired. It will also upskill the current manufacturing workforce and manufacturing supply chain jobs and produce apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities in the future. It is exciting that, as a result of this funding, LiquaForce will invest in new technologies to support their domestic and global competitiveness.

Family-run North Queensland manufacturer Tully Welding Works will receive \$438,563 to expand its current fabrication facility and purchase a state-of-the-art, automated beam drill line and robotic plasma cutting bench. The project will enable Tully Welding Works to enter into a whole new manufacturing market, provide up to seven new jobs and increase production and capabilities.

Finally, GTB Engineering will be awarded \$180,975 for the purchase and installation of a Plasmax high definition plasma cutting unit. This new equipment will improve business capabilities, improve productivity and is expected to create three new jobs.

Through the Manufacturing Hubs Grant Program, the Queensland government is certainly helping to strengthen the state's regional manufacturers and create jobs along the way. We have invested \$6.8 million in 25 companies to date and expect to create another 142 jobs in regional Queensland over five years. I look forward to updating the House on how this grants program is supporting regional manufacturers and creating much needed jobs.