




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Record of Proceedings, 28 November 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Rookwood Weir

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (7.32 pm): Construction of Australia's largest major water infrastructure asset is now complete—Rookwood Weir. It is the largest weir completed in Australia since World War II. It is also the largest piece of new water infrastructure delivered in Australia since the Queensland government completed Wyaralong Dam in 2011—also built by a Labor government. The \$568 million Rookwood Weir west of Rockhampton will yield 86,000 megalitres each year to boost economic growth, agricultural production and industry in Central Queensland. There were those in the LNP who said that it would never be built or who said that we were building a bathtub. I can tell members that it is a very big bathtub equivalent to 34,400 Olympic swimming pools—and it is finished. Since construction began in late 2020, the project has injected more than \$270 million into the Central Queensland economy and provided 350 jobs, with more than half the positions filled by Central Queenslanders. Importantly, more than 30 apprentices and trainees have worked on the project, creating more workers for the significant pipeline of water projects coming to Queensland.

The weir will deliver significant benefits to Central Queensland by shoring up the region's water security and driving economic growth and job creation for generations to come. More than 36,000 megalitres of water from the weir has already been allocated to agricultural use, with a mix of small businesses and large enterprises from the region now able to expand or diversify their operations. The first water from the weir is expected to be available in 2024. More than 2.1 million hours have been spent building the weir and several supporting projects including the \$2.2 million upgrade of the Capricorn Highway intersection, \$7.5 million upgrade for the widening of Thirsty Creek Road, \$12.5 million for the construction of the 260-metre-long Riverslea Bridge, \$2.2 million for the upgrade of Hanrahan Crossing, \$17 million for the construction of the new Foleyvale bridge, and \$7 million for the installation of a new fishway for the Fitzroy River Barrage. There were those who were critical that this project would never be delivered and they are also the same people who are critical and saying that the Rocky ring-road will not happen. It has already started.