



Speech By  
**Hon. Bart Mellish**


**MEMBER FOR ASPLEY**

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Record of Proceedings, 21 March 2024

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Central Queensland, Road Infrastructure**

 **Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (10.24 am): It was fantastic to be in Rockhampton last week for community cabinet. I spoke to many passionate, engaged Central Queenslanders who are working hard for their families and their communities. While in Rockhampton I visited the northern construction site of the Rockhampton Ring Road being delivered by Bielby and BMD in a joint venture. There is significant work already underway on the new Limestone Creek Bridge, the first of 19 new bridges that will be delivered as part of this project. The Limestone Creek Bridge will be 204 metres long and have 66 precast concrete T girders which will form the base of the bridge deck. The piledriving is ongoing and expected to be completed by mid-2024, and the bridge is expected to take 12 months to complete. As construction progresses, locally manufactured precast reinforced concrete T girders will be transported to the site.

With an increased Australian government commitment of \$1.2 billion and an increased Queensland government commitment of \$530 million, this massive investment will deliver the full 17.4 kilometres of the Rockhampton Ring Road, which will of course be part of the Bruce Highway when complete. Not only will this project transform the Central Queensland region by removing heavy vehicles from the centre of town; it will also provide increased connections to key precincts and improve access and travel times to critical services including the hospital and emergency services. Importantly, it will also build local workforce capacity, with an extended pipeline of road infrastructure construction for apprentices and trainees, engineers, technical services and local businesses.

Of the contracts awarded by the contractors to the end of January this year, local content is tracking just shy of 80 per cent, with contracts valued at \$38 million awarded to local suppliers already. Last week, the Miles government also announced a kick-starter package of \$100 million for critical roads within beef corridors. These are the roads that help get our world-famous Central Queensland beef products from the paddock to the plate—roads that will support this vital sector for Queensland. We have prioritised five projects in the region and will continue working on a 10-year Central Queensland beef roads investment strategy with local mayors and other stakeholders to bring on the Australian government's \$400 million investment for these corridors. These works are in addition to the \$107 million early works package announced in November last year to kickstart works on the \$1 billion Inland Freight Route, also known as the Second Bruce. Along with my cabinet colleagues, I am already looking forward to our next visit to Rockhampton for Beef Week and look forward to listening to more Central Queenslanders about delivering these important projects for the region.