




Speech By
Hon. Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Water Infrastructure

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (10.14 am): When it comes to listening to Queenslanders and delivering the infrastructure that regional Queensland needs, our Big Build program is leading the nation. When it comes to nation-leading projects, they do not come much more impressive than Rookwood Weir in Central Queensland. It is the biggest weir built in the nation since World War II. It is the biggest water infrastructure project built in the nation in over a decade. It has won many accolades and rightly so, if you ask me. To think, the LNP never wanted this project in Queensland.

The Queensland Labor government is leading the way when it comes to delivering big water assets and water security and, despite being completed only late last year, Rookwood Weir is already spilling. That means the economic benefits of Rookwood Weir are well and truly flowing. Agricultural businesses are moving ahead with new horticultural projects as Sunwater continues precommissioning works at the weir.

Last week, while we were in Rockhampton, I caught up with the owners of Lush Lychees. Thanks to a water allocation from the great weir, they are expanding their orchard in South Yaamba to 9,000 lychee trees. The new crop will mean the creation of another two permanent jobs and up to 30 casual picking jobs during the season. Krystal from Lush Lychees said that there is so much work to do: there is the planting, some construction work with the pivot irrigator and, of course, the harvesting later on. All of those tasks mean only one thing: more agricultural jobs in Central Queensland.

Whether it is Lush Lychees, macadamias or the proposed feedlot, there is so much more good news on the horizon in Central Queensland thanks to our government's investment in Rookwood Weir. Seeing those opportunities come to life means so much because we had to fight to get our fair share out of the former coalition LNP government for this project, while the opposition sat silent because they do not support jobs and water security in regional Queensland.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Speaker—

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I am sorry, member for Nanango. Member for Southern Downs, that was disorderly. You are warned under the standing orders. Member for Nanango, I assume you have a point of order.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Yes, I do, Mr Speaker. The minister on his feet is clearly misleading the House. I take personal offence at his mistruths. I ask him to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Member, I will pull you up. I do not believe you were mentioned directly. If you were, I did not hear you mentioned personally. You cannot take personal offence around a policy issue. I remind the minister and other ministers that the convention is that matters of public importance and public policy are to be discussed during ministerial statements.

Mr BUTCHER: While the hard work is done with Rookwood Weir and it moves into the operational phase, we are not stopping in Central Queensland. We are getting on with the job of delivering our regional jobs plan instead of putting a nuclear power plant in the region as the federal LNP want to do. We are investing in the Mount Morgan pipeline and the Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline. Both are currently underway and there are jobs on the ground. That is not to mention our investment in Building our Regions and our support for the Livingstone, Rockhampton and Central Highlands councils with their water infrastructure. We will continue to deliver our Big Build to keep our communities strong and create more jobs in Central Queensland.