

## **WIDE BAY-BURNETT'S MAJOR PROJECTS UNDERLINE DYNAMIC QLD ECONOMY**

Queensland is the midst of its greatest ever construction boom, Premier Peter Beattie said today at a gathering of 1130 of the State's key industry leaders.

Mr Beattie said according to the Government's *Projects Queensland 2005-06* report, 773 major projects over \$10 million each were being currently undertaken or planned right across the State, covering mining and minerals processing, public transport, roads, rail, energy, ports, water infrastructure, tourism facilities, schools and hospitals.

He said the Government was driving much this development via its \$66 billion South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan as well as its 10 year Blueprint for the Bush which maps out \$36 billion of public and private investment already being undertaken or under active consideration to sustain and grow rural and regional communities.

"Queensland is experiencing the most sustained period of growth and prosperity ever recorded in the State's history - stronger than any other state in Australia. As a result, business confidence in the State is high and we're attracting strong investment across all industrial sectors, from our traditional industries like mining to our emerging industries like aviation and aerospace," Mr Beattie said.

"What's driving our economic success story are: our growing population and the economic opportunities that are coming with that, the boom in the mining sector, especially the coal industry, and the Government's Smart State strategy which is setting up the State beautifully for the next 20 years of economic and social development.

"And all this in turn is driving a huge amount of construction activity throughout Queensland.

Local MPs Member for Bundaberg Nita Cunningham and Member for Hervey Bay Andrew McNamara welcomed the focus on major projects, especially in the Wide bay Burnett region.

"This great region and its diversity is playing a great role. Be it engineering, tourism or agriculture or aviation we have something to offer," said Mrs Cunningham.

Mr McNamara echoed Mrs Cunningham. "Our diversity is our strength. It is no surprise that this has us as the place to be."

Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for State Development, Trade and Innovation, Anna Bligh said you only had to look at what was happening in the Wide Bay-Burnett region to see the level of economic activity in Queensland these days.

Some of the major State, Federal and local government and private sector projects currently under construction or on the drawing board in Wide Bay-Burnett are the:

- \$470 million for the Coal Electric Loco Fleet Upgrade in Maryborough, which started in 2000, for the upgrade of 18 x 3900 class locos, to rebuild three prototype locomotives and the purchase of 60 Hitachi locomotives.
- The \$289 Mettrip Rolling Stock Project is underway in Maryborough for rolling stock units and ancillary stabling works for suburban train networks in South East Queensland, expected to be completed in 2010;
- \$300 million Sansara Resort in Agnes Waters;
- \$153 million CoralCoveVillage and Golf Resort in Bagara. Coral Cove is the only master-planned community in the Wide Bay-Burnett region, located on 215 ha of coastal land, with 1.2km of ocean frontage and an 18-hole golf course.
- \$139 million Cairns Tilt Train project in Maryborough for the design and manufacture of a new diesel-powered tilt train for Traveltrain services between Brisbane and Maryborough, which is nearing full completion;
- \$97 million in Maryborough for the manufacture of 15 x 4000 class electric locomotives between Ipswich and Maryborough, which began in 2005. Also in Maryborough, the \$62 million Diesel Electric Locomotive Fleet project involving the acquisition of 11x 4000 class diesel electric locomotives;
- \$75 million HerveyBayAirportIndustrial Park, which is expected to be substantially occupied by 2008 and could create 1,000 jobs. It will incorporate infrastructure features such as broadband access and industrial water recycling, proximity to a major jet airport, local shops, service station, childcare and other support services;
- The Department of Main Roads is expected to commence a \$26.5 million project to duplicate the existing two lane sections of the Maryborough-Hervey Bay Road, between Torbanlea turnoff and McNally Street, to a four lane standard. It has also allocated \$12.8 million for intersection improvements in Bundaberg city, and proposed \$42 million for improvements to Bundaberg Ring Road;
- \$25.9 million Aircraft Factory in Kingaroy is under construction to design and build two-seater aircraft for the commercial pilot training market;
- Work is planned to start on the \$20 million FraserCoastMarineIndustrial Park in late 2006. It will service commercial fishing vessels, charter boats, barges and ferries and has a designated area of 64 ha on the MaryRiver;
- A design concept has been developed for an \$11 million redevelopment of the BundabergAirport featuring a new state-of-the-art terminal and upgraded security;
- \$10 million Riverside Parklands Implementation project is under construction in Bundaberg for the Turtle Interpretive Centre and Anzac Pool relocation.
- \$10 million Tarong Northern Land Ash Emplacement Project, developed by the Tarong Energy Corporation, is the proposed construction of an ash storage facility to service the Tarong and Tarong North Power Stations.
- \$10 million project proposed to increase capacity of Lenthalls Dam, located about 25km north-west of Maryborough. The project involves expanding the urban water supply by a 2m raising of the dam to satisfy the water needs of the current and projected population;
- The Queensland Government has called for expressions of interest for the redevelopment of the UranganBoastHarbour precinct in HerveyBay;

Ms Bligh said this drive to greater economic development was not without its challenges, especially on the issues of water supply and the skills shortage that were not only affecting Queensland, but all of Australia.

She said the Government had committed more than \$600 million in new water infrastructure projects alone for South East Queensland for 2006/07 and significant water infrastructure projects worth \$990 million were under consideration for other parts of the State.

"We're also responding to the skills shortage with a range of initiatives, including the \$1 billion Queensland Skills Plan we launched in March this year and which provides for a 17,000 new trades training places by 2010 and Engineer Your Future whereby we're actively working with industry and our tertiary institutions to encourage and support our young people to follow engineering as a career," she said.

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