

**Hon. Terry Mackenroth MP**  
**Deputy Premier**  
**Treasurer and Minister for Sport**

**18 June, 2002**

**BUDGET FUNDS TARGET QUEENSLAND REGIONS**

The 2002-03 State Budget focused strongly on rural and regional Queensland with \$2.7 Billion or approximately 56 percent of the total capital works program to be spent outside Brisbane, the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, Mr Terry Mackenroth, said today.

Mr Mackenroth said the Beattie Government recognised rural and regional Queensland as the backbone of the State's economy and was committed to working with local communities to continue to drive economic growth and prosperity.

"Queensland is Australia's most decentralised State and our vision for a growing Smart State requires a strong commitment to supporting regional growth and improving the livability of our cities, towns, regions and remote communities," Mr Mackenroth said.

"We want to help expand services, export markets and encourage value-adding industries such as tourism, infrastructure and agriculture projects."

Major initiatives and capital works projects in regional and rural Queensland will include:

- \$437 Million for grant and subsidy programs to support the provision of local government infrastructure and services;
- \$209.2 Million (\$35.3 Million in 2002-03) to continue work on the Burnett Water Infrastructure Development, comprising the Burnett River Dam, together with the Eidsvold, Barlil and Jones Weir Developments;
- \$120 Million (increased from \$55 Million) as part of the State Government's current contribution to complete planning and enable a construction start on the Tugun Bypass;

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- a \$15 Million underlying increase in 2002-03 in the Budget for Primary Industries including funding for drought assistance and enhanced Foot and Mouth disease preparedness;
- \$12 Million in joint Commonwealth/State funding to develop the skills of our primary producers.
- \$20 Million to provide low interest loans to cane producers to cover the cost of planting and fertilising their 2003 cane crop;
- \$6 Million to maintain an appropriate level of air and long distance bus services to communities located in rural and regional Queensland;
- \$9 Million over two years as the State's contribution to the Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative which will fund programs such as bore rehabilitation;
- \$38.7 Million for the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition centre; and

Mr Mackenroth said a new \$500 Million power infrastructure package in north and central Queensland would also provide the catalyst for a new stage of economic and industrial development in those regions.

“The construction of a new pipeline sourcing coal seam methane from the Bowen basin and the development of a base-load gas-fired power station in Townsville will prove an economic boom for communities in these regions,” he said.

“It is expected to create 8,000 full-time equivalent jobs over the first decade, boosting employment in north Queensland by 5.43 percent.”

Mr Mackenroth said each region would also share in the extra 200 health professionals, 382 teachers and 307 police officers to be employed across the State next financial year.

He said they would also all benefit from the \$1.6 Billion capital works funding for transport and main roads, \$273.9 Million for education such as new schools and maintenance, \$254.1 Million for health and \$226.6 Million for law, order and public safety.

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