

## CONCURRENT SESSION PRESENTATION

### More Jobs, More Opportunities In Queensland

Speaker - Susan McNulty, Australia

#### Synopsis

*Queensland is Australia's economic engine room. After a decade of significant investment in infrastructure and research, through its forward thinking Smart State Strategy, Queensland is now on the verge of transforming itself into a knowledge-based economy. This transformation is being driven by creativity and innovation.*

*The importance of international alumni is to provide Queensland with diverse skills and international expertise, so that together we can continue to increase the productive capacity of the economy.*

*Culturally and environmentally, Queensland is vibrant and varied. Geographically Queensland's regions stretch from the tropics and rainforests through to the beautiful coastal regions, and the wide open plains and blue skies of the outback.*

*In fact, more Australians choose to move to Queensland than to any other Australian state. Come and share in our success.*

#### Presentation

##### *Introduction*

Good afternoon, I am Sue McNulty, Director of Migration and Skills Recruitment Queensland in the Queensland Government, Australia.

Like many of you today, I am an Alumni member of a Queensland university. I have also worked for the Queensland Government in a variety of roles for more than 20 years.

Queensland has a proud tradition of fostering research and world-class education. This is certainly reflected today in those of you who may have attended a Queensland tertiary institution.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with Queensland, I'll be providing you with an overview of why Queensland is quickly being recognised as the place to be in Australia – for research, business and lifestyle.

Before I take you through these opportunities presented through Queensland's current business industry and economic growth, I would like to introduce you to Queensland's lifestyle and its regions.

##### *Queensland Overview*

Queensland is Australia's second largest state in area, taking up almost one quarter of the entire country. To put it in a global perspective, Queensland is seven times larger than Great Britain.

Queensland is recognised around the world as not only a great place to live, but also for its progressive and dynamic economy and culture.

Queensland's spectacular coastline stretches for nearly 7,000km, offering everything from international beach resort towns to country communities and remote bushland in the far north.

Queensland is home to one of the seven natural wonders of the world – the Great Barrier Reef – which is the largest natural feature on earth stretching more than 2,300 km along the Queensland coastline.

Queensland is also home to four World Heritage-listed areas: the world's largest sand island at Fraser Island; Tropical North Queensland's Wet Tropics including the world's oldest rainforest – the Daintree; and Australian fossil mammal sites at Riversleigh in the Gulf country; and the Great Barrier Reef.

Queensland's sub-tropical climate means moderate year-round temperatures, with mild winters through to summers spent at the beach. In fact, Queensland is affectionately known as the Sunshine State. In short, Queensland:

- is just over seven hours by direct flight from Singapore
- has a cosmopolitan and multicultural society and;
- a dynamic economy

Queensland has it all – from tourist attractions and markets, through to international world-first art exhibitions and theatre. Queensland is also known for community cultural celebrations and street festivals.

From Cape York to Coolangatta and out west to Camooweal, Queensland is an exciting place with a diverse range of experiences.

#### *The West*

Firstly in the West...Western Queensland is an attractive area for business and investment that is ripe for development.

The vast region is home to Australia's richest grazing lands, and some of its most plentiful gas fields. Regional topography varies from mountains to grazing lands, and from blacksoil plains to red desert landscapes. Covering a broad area, this region produces some of the country's best beef and is known internationally as one of the top 10 producers in the world for copper, silver, lead and zinc.

The region boasts a relatively low cost of living, extremely low crime rates and very reasonable land prices.

#### *The North*

The North is driven by a strong and diverse economy, plus proximity to the world famous Great Barrier Reef and tropical rainforests. This region offers excellent investment and growth opportunities and a balanced combination of lifestyle, advanced infrastructure and a positive economic environment.

As new migrants from overseas and interstate continue to move to North Queensland they are bringing new ideas, innovation and fresh energy to the region. For example, the Australian Tropical Forest Institute in Cairns is a \$7.8 million dollar investment by the Queensland Government – with world leading scientists and researchers who are all seeking to improve the sustainability of tropical forest resources.

The region is also home to large army and air force bases, which are often called upon to provide support to our friends in the Asia Pacific region. These bases also provide excellent economic advantages and attract many entrepreneurs, innovative manufacturing companies and suppliers to the region.

#### *The Centre*

With its extensive coal reserves, mineral and resource deposits, central Queensland is an engine room of the Queensland economy. Its climate and soils are highly suited to primary production - particularly beef, sheep and grain.

A growing tourism market is also helping to boost the region's profile internationally – with major tourist resorts and natural attractions such as the Carnarvon Gorge, the Central Queensland Gemfields and the Keppel Islands. The City of Gladstone is home to Queensland's largest multi-commodity deepwater port, making it a major hub for export activity in the Asia Pacific region.

The city of Rockhampton is well known as the Beef Capital of Australia, while Bundaberg is iconic for its famous drinks, turtles and growing aviation industry.

You may also be aware that the Singapore Airforce has a permanent base at Rockhampton Airport and trains regularly in the area.

#### *The South*

Brisbane, the capital of Queensland, has the fastest growing population of any capital city in Australia and continues to develop at a breakneck speed. The population of Brisbane has reached 1.8 million people and the larger South-East Queensland corner is home to over 2.7 million people. This represents over 65 percent of Queensland's population.

The wider South-East Queensland corner's population is projected to reach approximately 3.7 million people by 2021 – an increase of nearly one million people. Much of this growth is driven by interstate and overseas migration and industry development.

Weekend getaways are easy in the South East – with the Gold and Sunshine Coasts providing idyllic beach, rainforest, country and hinterland destinations, all within 90 mins drive from Brisbane.

Despite growth in housing prices across Australia, Brisbane remains less expensive than Sydney, Melbourne and Perth.

#### *High Standards*

Queensland has a world class education system, providing education and training to all Queenslanders. Our State funded primary and secondary Schools challenge students to think creatively in positive learning environments – they also provide access to all the latest tools and technologies.

In addition to this – the state boasts three Queensland Academies. These specialist schools, for students in years 10 – 12, are dedicated to advancing our cleverest students who are interested in pursuing key innovation oriented careers.

#### *Higher Learning*

Queensland is home to nine internationally recognised universities as well as several major research facilities. Two of these include:

- Queensland Institute of Medical Research in Brisbane

- Australia Institute of Marine Science in Townsville.

### *Booming Industry*

Lifestyle however, is not the only attraction – the South East's population growth is dominated by people chasing our education and employment opportunities.

One third of Queensland's economy stems from knowledge intensive sectors – life sciences, information and communication technologies (ICT), creative industries and food and beverage manufacturing – many of which are concentrated in the South-East Corner.

### *Economic Facts*

Queensland is a culturally diverse and economically vibrant State. Increasingly, Queensland is becoming a key business destination and global business player.

We generate economic activity, not just in Queensland, - but also through exports and business activities and partnerships throughout Australia and the Asia Pacific Region.

These activities are across a number of industries. The Queensland Government has also prioritised 15 Industry sectors for development given their high potential for growth. These include

- Alternative Fuels
- Aviation
- Creative Industries
- Mining
- Therapeutic Medicines and Devices
- Wine
- Biotechnology
- Environmental and mining technologies and services
- Processed Foods
- Marine Industries
- Tourism
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Water
- Primary Industries
- ICT

Our economic and population growth leads Australia. It's fuelled by high levels of business investment, strong industries and the largest public infrastructure spending program in Australia's history.

Queensland intends to spend \$17 billion on capital works in 2008-2009, more than double the per capita spending of other Australian states, including:

- \$6.9 billion on transport and roads
- \$3.9 billion on energy infrastructure.

Queensland overall has a \$107 billion SEQ Infrastructure Plan from 2008-2026.

### *Australia's Most Exciting Economy*

In the last ten years, Queensland's economy has outperformed all other states. During 2006/07, Queensland's economy grew at 6.85%, as compared with 2.5% for the rest of Australia. By any measure, we have Australia's most progressive economy.

Multinational organisations are increasingly choosing Queensland over Sydney and Melbourne, as the ideal base for their Asia Pacific and Australian operations.

Examples of those who have made a base in Queensland include: Hastings Deering (earth moving equipment); Red Hat (information technology); IBM; AlfaPharm (Pharmaceuticals); Pandemic (Games company); and most mining giants such as Rio Tinto and Xstrata.

The introduction of these multinational bases has created more employment and business opportunities. For example, approximately 1,500 technology firms are currently supporting the mining industry, ranging from geotechnical specialists to producers of specialised safety equipment.

While Queensland is well known for its mining and other commodity industries, it is also a diverse and modern economy. The size and strength of the ICT sector is an example of this. This sector in Queensland employs over 77,000 people in 5,600 businesses. The number of businesses has increased more than 30% over the last four years (since 2003/04). Almost 80% of ICT businesses are located in South East Queensland.

We also have significant development in a range of high technology sectors including biotechnology, environmental technology and aerospace.

Queensland's economic, cultural and regional development is creating a need for skilled people across a broad range of industries. The key skills currently in critical demand in Queensland include

- Engineers –to help rollout the south-east Queensland's \$107billion infrastructure program
- Tradespeople – to ensure we have the skills we need to continue to build for the future
- Nurses and Doctors – to staff the State's world-class health facilities and deliver the excellent health services all Queenslanders enjoy
- Creative professionals – to drive the State's transformation into a knowledge-based economy through innovation, technology and creativity.

Queensland leads the nation in economic growth, but we continue to broaden our economy and develop new industries.

Smart State is the Queensland Government's vision of a state where knowledge, creativity and innovation drive economic growth, to improve our prosperity and quality of life. The vision is for Queensland to develop into a knowledge-based economy and diversify our traditional economic base of mining and agriculture.

That's why over the last ten years of unprecedented economic growth – the Queensland Government has invested AU\$3.4billion in research and development and innovation. This has resulted in 36 new research institutes and created 60,000 jobs in industries such as aviation, biotechnology, advanced manufacturing and creative industries.

Having laid our solid infrastructure foundation, we are now investing more in people and talent. We aim to make the most of our world class research infrastructure building on recent achievements like Human Papilloma Virus Vaccine.

As such, our investment in attracting the best-of-the-best to Queensland has increased from AU\$12million to AU\$43million, through which we will provide scholarships, fellowships and research grants.

#### *Skilled Migration*

As a result of this growth and low unemployment, Queensland has a strong demand for skilled people. Queensland's current unemployment rate is 3.75% - the lowest in 34 years.

One of the ways to address this is through migration. In 2006-07, 13,933 migrants and their families were attracted to Queensland through Australia's skilled migration program. Also, 17,724 skilled migrants and their families were sponsored by employers through a temporary visa program.

The Queensland government knows it makes sense to attract more migrants to our communities – we value the knowledge and diversity they can bring. We also value their skills and experience. There are several skilled visas which people can access if they have skills for migration purposes.

#### *Business Migration*

If you are an intending business or investor migrant, the Queensland Government may also be able to sponsor you for your visa application. There are a number of options to suit every type of migrant looking to call Queensland home.

The work live play website is a great source of material on living and working in Queensland and it contains all our vital information on visa categories ([www.workliveplay.qld.gov.au](http://www.workliveplay.qld.gov.au)).

#### *Closing*

In closing, Queensland is a progressive, growth state in a first-world country. It is close, cosmopolitan, clean, green and safe with many opportunities to develop your businesses and career. I trust that the presentation today has shown you a few of these opportunities. Thank you.

*Ends*