

Central Bulletin

A newsletter from Central Queensland's only Senator, Matthew Canavan

THE NATIONALS
for Regional Australia

LNP LIBERAL
NATIONAL
PARTY



JOBS, GROWTH & WATER

COALITION ESTABLISHES \$5BN NORTHERN INFRASTRUCTURE BANK



PLUS...

- NEW ROADS TO CONNECT THE NORTH**
- SPOTLIGHT ON COMPETITION POLICY**
- THE PLAN TO DAM NORTHERN AUSTRALIA**



Unleash the potential of Australia's north

In July this year, Senator Matthew Canavan was elevated to the Federal Cabinet, taking on the portfolio of Resources and Northern Australia.

Recently I received the honour of being appointed as the Minister for Resources and Northern Australia by the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull.

I am excited to have been given responsibility for a key element of the Coalition Government's economic agenda. I am also lucky to be gaining responsibility for an area where so much good work has already been done by my predecessors Ian Macfarlane and Josh Frydenberg, and a solid foundation for a new era of mining and Northern Australian development is ready to be built upon.

I have said before that our job is to create a kind of "Brisbane line in reverse". I want an Australia where people want to move to north of the Tropic of Capricorn so they too can benefit from the huge opportunities that are here.

Doing this is important for our whole nation, not just the north. Further growth and development in Northern Australia will help grow the national economy as a whole, and take pressure off our congested capital cities.

I too have 'walked the walk', moving my Senate office and my family to Rockhampton. It is a great honour to

be able to represent the people of Northern Australia not just in the Senate but in the Cabinet as well.

I also want to thank all of the people of Queensland that helped me get elected to the Senate for my second term.

I look forward to delivering on our commitments to build the north. During the election I helped announce more than \$500 million in infrastructure spending for the north. On 1 July the \$5 billion Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility began operations too.

As the Resources Minister I plan to work closely with a major industry for Australia. There has been a huge increase in investment in mining and that means that our mining sector will be more important in the future than it ever has been.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "m. canavan".

Senator Matthew Canavan
Minister for Resources and Northern Australia

Special congratulations to the CQ LNP team

I wish to extend a special congratulations to the Central Queensland LNP Team - Ken O'Dowd, Michelle Landry and George Christensen, on their recent re-elections.

In being re-elected, Ken and Michelle delivered the 75th and 76th seats in the

Federal Parliament, and hence delivered majority government to the Coalition.

It's a great result for Central Queensland, because together Michelle, Ken and George make a formidable team.

I look forward to working with them over the next three years to deliver

on our plans for Central Queensland, particularly building the Rookwood Weir to drought-proof CQ and double the region's agricultural capabilities.

Well done team!



Queensland delivers Coalition government

The Coalition Government has been re-elected. It was a tough campaign fought in difficult economic circumstances especially in regional Queensland.

Parts of regional Queensland are doing it very tough in the face of a mining investment downturn and drought. Unemployment rates in some areas are in double digits.

In that environment, it is a credit that hard working LNP members like Warren Entsch, George Christensen, Michelle Landry, Ken O'Dowd and Keith Pitt won re-election. Michelle's victory was personal for me, having moved my family to put a Senate office in Rockhampton for the first time in 25 years, it was great to see us retain Capricornia for the first time since the Labor split of the 1950s.

I welcome David Littleproud and Llew O'Brien to our party room too, and while I can't mention all of the members and candidates in the south east corner, special mention to Luke Howarth and Trevor Evans who prevailed in very tough battles.



I also pay tribute to the work and contributions of Wyatt Roy, Ewen Jones and Joanna Lindgren, who unfortunately lost their seats at the election.

There is no doubt that once again Queensland delivered government for the Coalition.

In part we won because of our strong plans to develop our country and grow jobs. I now have the honour of implementing many of these plans as the Prime Minister asked me to serve as the Minister for Resources and Northern Australia.

Developing the north is important for our whole nation. Further growth and development in Northern Australia will help grow the national economy as a whole, and take pressure off our congested capital cities.

Our resources sector too has never been more important to our nation. While the mining investment boom is declining, we are exporting record amounts of coal, iron ore and are on track to become the world's biggest exporter of LNG.

Most of all I would like to thank all of you who helped me be re-elected as a Senator for Queensland. It is an enormous honour to serve in this role and I hope I can repay the trust you have shown me in this next term of Coalition Government.

Canavan-stagram



@mattjcan

Senator for Queensland. Photos from the election campaign.

✓ Following



THE AUSTRALIAN

March 30, 2016

Unite to unlock value of north

OPINION: Matthew Canavan, Minister for Northern Australia

There is a story that does the rounds in Townsville, that at the end of World War II, the US Army suggested it could blow up Castle Hill and use the rock to build a causeway to Magnetic Island. While painfully jogging up that “hill” the other morning, I wished they had done it, or at least removed the top half.

It is amazing what can be done at a time of crisis. At the time of the war, the Bruce Highway was the only major road south from north Queensland — making it particularly vulnerable if a quick escape was required. So the US Army did something about it and built an inland route from Cairns to the south; that road still exists today: the Hann Highway. Another story goes that if the war had continued a little longer, the Americans planned to seal it. To this day sections of Hann remain unsealed, and Queensland can be cut in half if flooding disrupts the coastal Bruce Highway.

The Hann Highway is one of the roads in the north that the government has made eligible for upgrade through its Northern Australia Roads Program. We have allocated \$600 million to the task. Sealing the Hann would reduce the distance between Cairns and Melbourne by 800km in comparison with coastal routes, and save more than eight hours for a truck driving this route.

There is not a lack of opportunities in northern Australia, there has been a lack of infrastructure. Northern Australia receives 60 per cent of our rainfall and makes up 40 per cent of our land mass; and 55 per cent of our exports are sent from northern ports.

Already northern Australia punches above its weight. Only 6 per cent of Australians live in northern Australia but together they produce 11 per cent of our GDP. Each full-time employee in Australia produces about \$186,000 of economic output a year. In the north, each employee generates about \$370,000 of economic output a year. It makes sense to reinvest in the parts of the country that are already making money for the country.

That is why the government has a \$6.2 billion plan for northern Australia. There is \$600m for the roads mentioned above, and another \$100m for “beef roads” so that the cost of transporting cattle can be brought down; at times it can cost a third of their final value to transport cattle to market.

We have made \$200m available to develop the water resources of the north. The second biggest water catchment in Australia, after the Murray-Darling, is the Fitzroy Basin. More water flows out of the Fitzroy, near Rockhampton, into the Pacific Ocean than any other river on the eastern seaboard.

We are making further investments in research and development, establishing more flexible land tenure arrangements for indigenous Australians, and investing in areas in which the north has a special advantage, such as tropical medicine.

Last week Resources Minister Josh Frydenberg and I introduced a bill to establish a \$5bn concessional loan facility for the north. There is a lot of opportunity in the north but like many new investments, there is a lot of risk too. The Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility will help reduce some of that risk.

At the same time we have designed the fund to protect taxpayers’ interests. Successful projects will be picked by an expert board, 50 per cent of debt required for a project will have to come from other sources, and all investments will require the co-operation of federal, state and territory governments.

Growing the economic pie of northern Australia will produce wealth for all Australians, given that 80 per cent of Australian taxes end up in Canberra.

Most importantly, developing our wealth will best position Australia relative to Asia. By 2030, two-thirds of the world’s middle class will live in the Asia-Pacific region. Our whole country stands to benefit, but Darwin is closer to Jakarta than it is to Melbourne. We also can’t take it as a given that Asia will look south to us. Beijing is closer to Berlin than it is to Sydney. Developing our north will bring Australia closer to Asia.

The government’s white paper for the development of northern Australia is the first ever for the north.

It is a plan that all Australians should be able to unite around, regardless of where you live or who you work for.

(Originally published in The Australian, March 30)

Farmers protest against Labor's obscene tree clearing laws

Queensland Labor is trying to impose wreckless anti tree-clearing laws that will drive up the cost of food and electricity, and damage the Great Barrier Reef.

Earlier this year I had the privilege of visiting the picturesque irrigation town of Lakelands, north of Cairns. There Peter Indibitzen has built a successful family farming operation. His banana operations, in particular, are some of the most efficient in the country, and he is also a pioneer in waste management and recycling.

Peter would like to expand his operations and to do he needs more water to create more jobs.

The government wants to support people like Peter and that is why we announced during the election that we would provide \$825,000 towards the dreams of the people of Lakelands to build a dam and irrigate perhaps another 15,000 hectares.

As Minister for Northern Australia, I want to see the north develop. It's not going to develop through my efforts or the government's efforts. It is going to develop through the vision, dreams and hard work of people like Peter. The people of Northern Australia will develop Northern Australia.

Yet the Queensland government is proposing to adopt laws that will stop the people of Northern Australia developing this country and taking these opportunities.

Worse still, they will take that opportunity away from the indigenous people of the

Cape in particular. Some of whom I saw a few months later at a protest rally against these laws when I was back in Lakelands.

But we can fight back against the invasion of tree police onto private property. We have an election between now and these laws being debated in the State Parliament. Thank you very much for coming out today but we need you back in two weeks' time, not just here in Lakelands but in Cairns, in Townsville and in Rockhampton to send a message to the Labor party that they can't just steal property from farmers and get away with it.

The Labor party's tree-clearing won't even achieve the environmental outcomes they are trying to realise. In the words of AgForce State Councillor for Central Queensland John Baker, Labor's tree clearing laws "will cause erosion, meaning more sediment will flow into our river systems, which will in turn damage the Great Barrier Reef."

Labor's tree-clearing laws will impose a massive cost to our economy in the years to come if they are allowed to pass. I've taken part in public forums and protests against these laws all across Queensland, from Rockhampton, Clermont and Emerald to as far north as Lakeland near Cooktown, because I'm convinced people power can help overturn this bill.

What does AgForce say about Labor's tree-clearing laws?



"In its current form it will basically shut down high-value agriculture in the north and irrigated high-value agriculture."

"It shows how out of touch this [Queensland State] government is."

"One of the growth areas for Queensland is agriculture and northern development and to do this is just crazy, it's just really a very sad piece of legislation."

*- Grant Maudsley, President of AgForce
(ABC Rural, 18/03/16)*



Senator Matthew Canavan addresses protesters at a rally in Townsville.



Senator Matthew Canavan addresses concerned farmers at a public forum at Lakeland, south of Cooktown.



Farmers, joined by State Member for Gregory Lachlan Millar, protest against Labor's tree clearing laws in Rockhampton.

The Courier Mail

May 26, 2016

DAM FIVE DAY FOR FARMERS

COALITION'S \$150M TO HELP MAKE US DROUGHT-PROOF



EXCLUSIVE STEVEN SCOTT

CENTRAL Queensland towns will never run out of water and the region's farm output could double within five years under a Coalition plan to fast-track a new dam near Rockhampton.

Malcolm Turnbull will splash \$150 million on Queensland dams including a 50 per cent down-payment on Rookwood weir as a bid to massively boost investment in agriculture and drought-proof the state.

The centrepiece of the announcement is a pledge to spend up to \$130 million on building the central Queensland dam, contingent on the project getting the green light from a state business case and environmental approval.

The dam is expected to create more than 2900 full-time jobs in farming. Queensland will also soak up half of a \$60 million national fund for studies into new dams. A network of 14 proposed dams across the state will be earmarked for a combined \$20 million to assess whether they should proceed.

The new list of priority dams takes in the length of the state from the Lakeland Irrigation Area, Southern Alberton Tablelands and Hell's Gate Dam in the south to Emu Swamp Dam in the north.

TAKING THE PLUNGE: Matt Canavan says the Coalition's dam proposals will make central Queensland more attractive to investors and help drought-proof the state. Picture: Jack Tran

CASH FLOW \$150 million for 14 water infrastructure projects across the state:

- 1 Lakeland Irrigation Area feasibility study **\$825,000**
- 2 Southern Alberton Tablelands Irrigation Development feasibility study **\$750,000**
- 3 Hell's Gate Dam feasibility study **\$2.2m**
- 4 Feasibility study for northwest Queensland strategic water storage **\$1.76m**
- 5 Burdekin Haughton Channel capacity upgrade feasibility study **\$1.91m**
- 6 Burdekin Falls Dam Raising business case development **\$400,000**
- 7 Urannah Dam feasibility study **\$3m**

- 8 Works program development to provide water security and economic growth in Clermont **\$225,000**
- 9 Rookwood weir final business case **\$2m** (plus \$130 million for construction)
- 10 Hanslaberg Channel capacity upgrade feasibility study **\$750,000**
- 11 Gayndah Regional Irrigation Development project feasibility study **\$1.23m**
- 12 Feasibility study into using aquifer recharge for agriculture sustainability and productivity **\$120,000**
- 13 Feasibility study into using southeast Queensland's treated effluent for agricultural production **\$650,000**
- 14 Emu Swamp Dam business case development **\$3.97 million**



PLUS \$130 million to build Rookwood weir near Rockhampton

- BENEFITS**
- An additional **\$1 billion** in agricultural production
 - More than **2100** new full-time jobs in agriculture sector
 - Modelling indicates private investment in agricultural development will be **\$4 for every \$1** government invests in construction

Coalition is taking action by carrying out the most significant investment in infrastructure in Australian history, including an ambitious water reform agenda, so we can continue to build a strong national economy and create more jobs."

Mr Turnbull said new water projects were needed to support an expansion in agriculture and help Australia's economy rebound after the end of the mining boom. "As the economy transitions and diversifies, agricultural exports are playing a more important role than ever before," he said. "The

the federal funding for Rookwood Weir will cover half the cost of the project and will need to be matched by money from the State Government or councils.

The dam had initially been slated for possible funding next year after economic and environmental studies had been completed but the Coalition is confident it will pass

in building dams and is on top of a \$2 billion loans facility for water projects announced in the budget.

Private investment in agricultural development will be \$4 for every \$1 government invests in construction, modelling suggests.

A doubling of agricultural output once the dam is built would inject \$1 billion a year into the region and could see Rockhampton become the "grain capital" as well as the "beef capital" of the country.

Farming wealth to come from the north

MATT CANAVAN

IT HAS been a long-held goal of multiple governments to double Australia's agricultural production. We can't grow more food without water, and that means building dams so that we can store water, like money in a bank.

Today the Federal Government announces funding for 14 different water projects that could underpin an agricultural jobs boom for Queensland.

In central Queensland we are committing up to \$130 million to construct the Rookwood Weir, providing the State Government finalises a business case and receives environmental approvals. Rookwood is in the Fitzroy basin, the second largest water catchment in Australia, yet it only has one major dam at Emerald. Building Rookwood will create an average of 76,000 megalitres of water available a year, create an estimated 2900 jobs and double agricultural production in the Fitzroy basin.

This is the kind of investment Queensland needs to recover its mojo after a tough time post-mining boom and a lost year with a Labor State Government that has had no plan to drive growth.

Thirty years ago we had a state government of vision, which built the Burdekin Falls Dam. It today helps support more than 70,000ha of irrigation and thousands of jobs.

It is one of the most successful irrigation projects in the country. It also helps dispel the myth that we can't develop agriculture in the north. Northern Australia represents 40 per cent of our land mass and 60 per cent of our water resources, with many parts remaining undeveloped.

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Northern Australia represents 40 per cent of our land mass and 60 per cent of our water resources, with many parts remaining undeveloped.

The Australian Government has signed three trade agreements with China, South Korea and Japan, multiplying the opportunities available for farmers. The Coalition plan to develop the north is focused on developing agriculture. We should not downplay the potential for agriculture in the north.

(Originally published in The Courier Mail, May 26)



OUR PLAN FOR JOBS IN NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

- New projects through the \$5bn Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility
- Developing the North's water resources with the new \$2bn National Water Infrastructure Loan Facility, and the \$500 million National Water Infrastructure Development Fund
- Building the roads and infrastructure of Northern Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia with the Northern Australia and Beef Roads programmes



Coalition establishes Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility

The facility will provide \$5bn of financing for infrastructure across the north.

A key step in developing the full potential of Northern Australia has been taken this month, when \$5 billion in Commonwealth loan funds to build infrastructure became available.

The Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF) officially came into existence on July 1.

NAIF funding is a cornerstone of the Coalition Government's plan to unlock economic and population growth opportunities across the north, as set out in the Northern Australia White Paper.

The Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility will provide funding to build the

transport, energy and communications infrastructure needed in our north.

It will create jobs, enhance investment and unlock the full potential of this vibrant region to grow the Northern Australian economy.

We have made the decision to base the NAIF in Cairns, helping to bring a whole new financial services industry to the north.

The NAIF will play an important part in providing infrastructure that will create new investment and job opportunities.

• Investing more than \$7bn in defence in the north, including over \$5bn during the next decade through the Defence White Paper and \$2bn through the Australia-Singapore Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

• Investing \$60m in the Bowen Basin and Cairns, to diversify the region's economy after the mining boom

• Providing GeoScience Australia with \$100m to secure a pipeline of new greenfield exploration sites in Northern Australia for future development

• Placing northern decisions in northern hands with the location of agency headquarters in northern Australia

• Investing in communities through programs such as the Building Better Regions Fund, Community Infrastructure Grants and the Stronger Communities Programme

Cairns to host Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility

Along with establishing the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility, the Coalition has announced that Cairns will host its headquarters.

Among Cairns' many strengths are its undisputed connectivity to Asian markets, including Singapore, Hong

Kong and Japan and strong domestic connectivity.

Northern Australia punches well above its weight in terms of economic growth. It is home to just six per cent of our population, but produces 11 per cent of our GDP.

Locating a facility charged with developing this vital part of Australia in the north underscores our ongoing and genuine commitment to the region's long term development.

Coalition delivers vital funding to save Great Keppel Island beachfront

During the Federal Election campaign, I joined Capricornia MP Michelle Landry in announcing funding to help kick start vital repairs to a retaining wall protecting the beachfront at Great Keppel Island, off the coast of Yeppoon.

The \$220,000 contribution will go towards repairing the badly eroded Putney Beach near Hideaway Resort.

The area has taken a battering in recent years, with Cyclones Oswald and Marcia causing much of the beachfront to fall into the sea.

This has caused tourism infrastructure on this beautiful part of the world to literally wash out into the ocean.

Great Keppel Island is an extremely valuable asset to Central Queensland and it is the responsibility of all governments to assist in helping grow business there.

It has been feared that further erosion will cause a local aquifer to be contaminated by saltwater, resulting in even further losses of infrastructure on the island.

Thankfully, our funding announcement will go a long way towards ensuring that does not occur.

I also hope that the Federal Government's contribution to Great Keppel Island will prompt the Queensland Labor Government to provide additional funding to help save Putney Beach.

It's the least Queensland Labor can do, after snubbing the people of Yeppoon and Great Keppel by refusing to shore-up a major new resort on the island through a specialised casino license.

The proponents of the \$600m Tower Holdings Resort Project have requested a boutique gaming licence to attract international investment for their project on GKI.

It's a common sense proposal that could create around 1,500 much needed local jobs in Central Queensland.

I will continue to lobby the Queensland Labor Government to stop turning its back on re-generating Great Keppel Island's resort economy – once the backbone of the tourism industry in Central Queensland.

SPOTLIGHT ON ROOKWOOD

Recently, I had the privilege of joining Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce in announcing funding for the construction of the Rookwood Weir near Rockhampton.

This project is a game-changer for Central Queensland. It has the potential to create more than 2,000 new jobs. It will kick start a \$1 billion expansion of the agriculture sector in CQ.

In the words of Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce: "You can make money out of mud, but you can't make it out of dust."



THE QUILPIE REPORT: MATT'S FINDINGS

- The Drought Communities Program (DCP) is a \$35 million program to deliver benefits in targeted drought-affected regions of Australia
- The Guidelines for the DCP do not outline any specific criteria for the declaration of a Council but the Government has used measures of remoteness and rainfall deficiency to inform the decision to declare certain councils
- The lack of complete and accurate rainfall data in the Quilpie shire, and the pattern of the rainfall over the relevant period, compromises the usefulness of rainfall data as a measure of how this drought has impacted Quilpie
- Given the deficiencies in the rainfall data it would make sense to use a wider range of measures to judge eligibility for the DCP



- A survey of local businesses in the Quilpie shire shows a major downturn in business conditions for the period of the drought
- These impacts are substantial and are a threat to the ongoing economic and social viability of the region
- Other issues raised in the report include the impact of destocking, a lack of off-farm work, a reduction in discretionary spending and adverse psychological impacts including depression
- Given that the DCP's objective is to improve business and employment conditions in communities, declaration of the Quilpie Shire Council would help meet the objectives of the DCP



Report pays off: Quilpie receives drought declaration

I'm gratified to say that Quilpie, Boulia and Carpentaria Shire Councils have been added to the list of local government areas eligible to apply for funding through the Drought Communities Programme.

I have personally argued in particular that Quilpie should have been added to the list.

Late last year I presented the then Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss with a report, compiled with Gregory MP Lachlan Millar, that demonstrated Quilpie had been just as affected by the current drought as other areas already declared under the DCP.

The decision recognises the fact conditions in Quilpie should have made it eligible for funding under the Federal

Government's \$35-million Drought Communities Program (DCP), despite receiving marginally more rain than the eligibility criteria allow for.

I argued strongly that the only reason Quilpie had missed out is because the rainfall data is incomplete in Quilpie and it was affected by a storm event in February 2014 that did more damage than good. Without that storm, Quilpie would have been eligible without question.

Quilpie Mayor Stuart McKenzie and Lachlan Millar came to Canberra to point out to me the injustice of Quilpie missing out. They have both been lobbying hard for Quilpie's inclusion in the Drought Communities Programme, and this is a great result for Quilpie, Boulia and Carpentaria Shires.

What Quilpie small business owners are saying about the drought:

"Business is down. Graziers are cutting back. The wild dogs are killing sheep so farmers are moving out. Higher agricultural prices of inputs combined with the fact that people have less money in their pockets means that margins are being squeezed"

"Tourism has decreased. Birdsville week was reasonable, but not as good as previous years. There is no work in the town so many people have to travel to neighbouring shires to get work."

"Tourists are the only thing that is keeping us going."

"The graziers aren't spending anything. It's been quite a while since I've seen anyone from a local property come through my door. People who are destocked will have a hell of a problem getting back in at the prices cattle are now."

Contributions from the LNP

As a proud representative of the Liberal National Party, I want to give our members an opportunity to have their say. To that end, I am launching in this edition contributions from around our party.

Elections both at a federal and state level are showing a volatility not seen before. The history of political competition in Australia since the 2nd World War has been one of two groups, the Australian Labor Party and the Coalition going head to head. The rise of the Greens, other small parties and independents is showing a shift in this dynamic.

There is a general disenchantment with big party politics and politicians, driven in part by a lack of clarity of what they stand for. This is leading to a decline in the primary vote for both groups. While recent political strategy has focused on capturing the 'swinging voter' to win government, this focus has taken the eye off the ball of sustaining the existing support base. Strategies are needed to win back the disillusioned by addressing the issues that concern them. Many of these issues are local and regional. There's not an engagement with big picture national promises. Where there is, voters are rational people. Well explained logic on issues of spending constraint and plans for the future need to be personalised and supporters taken on the journey. Reading new initiatives as a 'fait accompli' in the media is not treating either party members or voters with due respect.

It doesn't hurt to remind ourselves of our philosophical base of small and less intrusive government, living within our means, the freedom and respect of the individual, due regard for entrepreneurial effort and reward and recognition of those who serve in our defence forces. We have a great message to sell. We need to get back to our roots and sell our message with clarity and enthusiasm.

Richard Williams
Chair, LNP Policy Standing Committee

On behalf of the Dawson FDC, congratulations to all the LNP candidates who put themselves forward to represent their community in the Federal Parliament. Congratulations also to all the rank and file LNP members who volunteered their considerable time and effort in support of the marathon campaign.

The economic environment in Central and North Queensland has been particularly challenging for some time now and it is a credit to the Members of Parliament who were re-elected given the difficulties of incumbency at a time when the voters are hurting and desperately looking for a way to steer our region back to prosperity.

The focus now for the re-elected Government must be to deliver on the promises the Coalition took to the election. The job creating infrastructure projects that received funding commitments need to commence as soon as possible to stimulate the economic activity our region urgently needs. These projects will provide an opportunity to diversify our economic base, grow employment and add capacity to the existing industries that will see our region continue to be a key economic driver and wealth creator for Queensland and Australia.

Whilst the political environment in Canberra will continue to remain testing with the makeup of the Senate still unknown, the Coalition cannot shy away from making the tough decisions to return the budget to surplus and address the debt position of our Country. Government spending priorities need to focus on initiatives that facilitate long term economic growth and taxation arrangements should not discourage those who, through hard work and effort are actively trying to better the lives of their family.

Michael Jones
Chair, Dawson Federal Divisional Council

As Chair of Flynn Divisional Council, I would like to thank Team Flynn for all the hard work and selfless sacrifice they put in to the last election to achieve the outcome of having our man Kenny re-elected.

Flynn is a very diverse electorate, and whilst the agriculture sector is responding to better prospects, the impact on the bottom line takes much longer to filter through and we are starting to see some evidence of this in the retail spending of these industries. Having said that, the major employer and generator of wealth in Flynn is the mining industry, which remains somewhat subdued.

While Ken works hard in an electorate representing roughly 100,000 constituents, we do need to assist him in promoting our party, our goals and our achievements. These include better roads, water infrastructure and extended telecommunications. We look forward to the Nathan Dam and Rookwood Weir becoming a reality, and the flow-on industries these will generate into the future.

It is great to see the LNP Women's group engaging further in our political scene with Central Highlands Women forming a branch in Emerald. I congratulate them on this achievement.

While party membership in Flynn is relatively stable, it is aging and we desperately need an injection of young and up-and-coming LNP members. I will continue to encourage them this year. We must all engage the young people we know in political discussions and urge them to become active in LNP affairs.

John Engwicht
Chair, Flynn Federal Divisional Council

Contributions from the LNP

A strong Federal Divisional Council is integral for the development of the brand name of the Liberal National Party and the promotion of the Federal Member, and for Capricornia this is Michelle Landry MP in addition to our local Senator Matt Canavan.

As the Capricornia FDC moves from the 2016 campaign, which saw the re-election of Michelle Landry MP and Senator Matt Canavan, towards the election of 2019, it is vital the executive and membership continue to promote the achievements of Michelle Landry in Capricornia and continue to communicate the changing needs of the electorate to our elected representatives to ensure the Turnbull Government continues to deliver for the Central Queensland region.

Priorities for the Capricornia FDC are the continued development of the Young Liberal National Party and the Capricornia Business Branch and the re-establishment of a new Liberal National Women's branch. Each branch will encourage our youth and local business to seek greater involvement in the continued achievements of Michelle Landry and ensure the LNP continues to understand and respond to the changing needs of our electorate.

The success of the Capricornia FDC since 2010, which saw a swing to the LNP in 2010, the election of Michelle Landry MP in 2013 and her re-election in 2016, requires the on going support from all members and it is important our branches reach out to our valued membership to seek their participation. Further, we must continue to foster strong relationships with our Federal Ministers and Senators and our State Members of Parliament, and encourage them visit the Central Queensland region to promote the brand name of the Liberal National Party.

Lance Rundle
Chair, Capricornia Federal Divisional Council

In the 1970s, Townsville was a hot, dry, dusty town with limited prospects, a far cry from the busy tropical city we see today. How has this miraculous change occurred? With visionary thinking by some to build the Burdekin Falls Dam.

Dams and water security form the basis of future development in North Queensland, and the region will be an emerging powerhouse thanks to the Coalition's White Paper on Developing Northern Australia.

It is very gratifying to see Senator Matt Canavan as Minister for Northern Australia move towards funding extensive dam and road networks. Agriculture, the beef industry, horticulture, forestry and tourism are just a few industries which will expand exponentially as these infrastructure projects come on line. We look forward to seeing these water and road infrastructure projects completed, as well as ports, remembering the benefits to the community will repay the costs many times over as development expands.

The future of North Queensland is limited only by our thinking. It is imperative that the newly created Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility in Cairns, with its \$5 billion war chest, selects projects in North Queensland with local knowledge input, in order to achieve the best returns on the nation's investment. Such benefits will flow through to all of us.

It is essential that both State and Federal levels of government work hand in glove to progress these infrastructure projects efficiently and effectively without the constraints of competing ideological priorities such as with land management practices, and impediments of costly anti-development appeals through the courts.

Robyn Quick
Chair, LNP Northern Development Policy Committee

Contribute to the *Central Bulletin*

I am welcoming future contributions for future editions of the *Central Bulletin*. If you would like to have your say in the next edition, please submit your letter via email to senator.canavan@aph.gov.au



The Nationals succeed in push for stronger competition laws

Earlier this year, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull announced the Government will introduce an 'effects test'. This important reform will strengthen Australia's competition laws and benefit consumers, small business and economic productivity more generally.

The Nationals have long argued that effective protections against large firms abusing their market power is an essential element of competition law, particularly for Australia's more than two million small businesses which make up more than 97 per cent of all businesses.

The Nationals have pushed strongly for an effects test since it was recommended by the Harper Review of Competition Policy in March last year. Under an effects test, rather than having to prove the intent behind anticompetitive actions, proof of an impact of such an action is needed instead – which is a less difficult hurdle to jump.

The need for more effective competition laws came to national prominence with the finding by the Federal Court in 2014 that Coles Supermarkets had engaged in unconscionable conduct in dealing with its suppliers. In the judgement, Justice

Gordon said that Coles' misconduct was "serious, deliberate and repeated", that Coles misused its bargaining power and its conduct was "not done in good conscience."

Coles was fined \$10 million, the maximum penalty permitted. In her December 2014 judgment Justice Michelle Gordon said: "The current maximum penalties are arguably inadequate for a corporation the size of Coles."

The introduction of an effects test will strengthen Australia's competition laws and make it harder for large companies to unfairly take advantage of their market position.

Our reforms will more effectively focus on the long-term interests of both small businesses and consumers, improving the law's clarity, effectiveness and force.

The change to Section 46 will protect the competitive process and is just one of the many actions the Government is taking to support small businesses, including by extending protections against unfair contract terms to small businesses and introducing Australia's first Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman.

WHAT IS AN 'EFFECTS TEST'?

In 2015, a comprehensive review of competition laws – the Harper Review – recommended the inclusion of an effects test in order to give small businesses adequate protection against the misuse of market power by Australia's largest firms. This was to be done by amending Section 46 of the Competition and Consumer Act 2010.

The problem with the legislation was that the wording of Section 46 leaves the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) with limited power when it comes to issues of anti-competitive activities and the misuse of market power.



Under Section 46, it has to be proved that the corporation:

- has a substantial degree of market power;
- the corporation had the purpose of lessening competition in a market, and;
- takes advantage of that market power.

Proving these separate steps require substantial evidence. As proving corporate motive is very difficult, this puts those who are alleging anti-competitive conduct at a major disadvantage in the courts.

Under an effects test, rather than having to prove the intent behind anticompetitive actions, proof of an impact of such an action is needed instead – which is a less difficult hurdle to jump.

Other changes the Government is making to improve our competition laws:

- Ensuring better access by small businesses to remedies and dispute resolution schemes
- Improving the collective bargaining regime under the competition law, to provide more flexibility and increased

information for small businesses to improve their bargaining position

- Encouraging state, territory and local governments to review their competitive neutrality guidelines, to ensure that their commercial operation

do not negatively affect commercial businesses

- Reviewing the anti-competitive impact of regulations, including standards and licensing, freeing up trading restrictions that apply to many businesses.

Coalition delivers for Queensland roads

Commitment to seal Hann Hwy

After years of work by people like Jane McNamara, now the Mayor of the Flinders Shire Council, and the Hann Highway Action Group, a Coalition Government has committed to seal the Hann Highway. This will create an inland corridor of commerce from Cairns to Melbourne, running through Hughendon, Barcaldine, Charleville, Cunnamulla and many other country towns. It will create an inland, flood-resilient route away from the Bruce Highway and the coast. It will take 8 hours off the journey -- saving the freight industry millions.

It was great to be in Cairns and Mareeba during the election campaign to announce the Coalition's commitment of \$42 million towards the Hann. We are also committed to ensuring that the work is done progressively so that local governments can have a crack at winning the work and providing jobs to locals.

The Federal Government has also announced related investments on the Flinders Highway and intersections in Mt Isa.

CQ roads remain high priority

The Coalition has made more than \$130 million of commitments to upgrade roads in Central Queensland, as part of our Northern Australian plan.

\$75 million will be invested to finally bypass the town of Walkerston. Most of the diesel for the Bowen Basin passes through this town at the moment, and large fuel trucks run dangerously close to the local school, and over a narrow

bridge over Bakers Creek. This bypass will also link with the Mackay Ring Road, currently under construction, to lower the costs for mining operations in the Bowen Basin.

\$60 million will be invested in upgrading the Capricorn Highway from Gracemere to Rockhampton to 4 lanes. This will ease congestion and also facilitate larger cattle trucks when further investments are made to allow Type 1 trucks to get to the Rocky meatworks.

Roads are the arteries of regional communities and these investments by the Federal Government will make the regions stronger.

Australia's third inland highway

During the election, the Coalition announced that we will seal a third inland route across Australia from east to west – the Outback Way that connects Western Queensland to Western Australia.

The Coalition will invest \$128 million towards the Outback Way across Central Australia, especially the part of the road unsealed west of Boulia, and 50 kilometres of road outside Alice Springs on the Plenty Highway. This is a nation building project that will especially help the beef industry of the Barkly Tableland connect with the channel country of Western Queensland.

A sealed route will also help bring more tourists to Central Australia, helping the economies of many country towns.



Map showing the Outback Way across Central Australia



Inspecting the Capricorn Hwy with Infrastructure Minister Darren Chester and CQ MP's Ken O'Dowd and Michelle Landry

Out on the hustings...

As the Minister for Northern Australia, I had no complaints about a long winter campaign... It was summer all year 'round up north!



With Capricornia MP Michelle Landry and Deputy PM Barnaby Joyce announcing \$7 million towards a multi-storey car park at Rockhampton Hospital.



Visiting Ray Jenvey and Sons Pineapples and Cane farm in Mackay. With CQ MP's Michelle Landry and George Christensen, and Deputy PM Barnaby Joyce.



Campaigning with Fisher LNP candidate Andrew Wallace at the University of the Sunshine Coast. We're looking at sting-less native honey bees, a great example of home grown innovation.



Flying over the proposed proposed Cave Hill Dam site near Cloncurry.



Talking to voters in Darwin after announcing \$130m for NT roads.



With Dawson MP George Christensen at the launch of the Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre in Mackay.



Talking to truckies in Rockhampton about Labor's reckless and dangerous truckies tribunal.



In Kununurra with Durack MP Melissa Price announcing \$95 million for road upgrades in north-west WA.



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