



Speech By
Hon. Jeff Seeney

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Planning Reform

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (2.05 pm): Planning reform is at the heart of our government's strategy for growing the Queensland economy and ensuring affordable housing for Queenslanders. Our aim has been to create the most efficient and effective planning and development assessment system in Australia, and we have taken great strides towards reaching that goal. I am pleased to announce to the House that our efforts to reform planning policy in Queensland have also not gone unnoticed in the planning world. Last night in Sydney, SARA, the State Assessment and Referral Agency, won a major national planning award at the Planning Institute of Australia's 2014 awards. I want to record my congratulations to Greg Chemello and his team in my department for their great effort. SARA has now been nationally recognised as a driver of planning excellence and is being looked at by other states. SARA was introduced by my department to simplify the way development applications were referred to and assessed by the state. It is a one-stop shop, a whole-of-government development assessment coordinator. The Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning became the single point for state assessment referrals in July 2013 to make the approvals process much more streamlined. Before this, under the Labor government, developers and councils were juggling proposals through multiple state agencies who often contradicted themselves, a process which cost valuable time and money and produced inconsistent outcomes and eroded business confidence. Last night's national award follows SARA's recognition at the state Planning Institute awards here in Brisbane last year.

The Newman government is delivering on its promise to provide better planning and infrastructure for all Queenslanders. Our efforts to unravel the red tape that has constrained our property and construction industry are clearly working. The latest data shows that over 24 consecutive monthly increases Queensland's total trend dwelling approvals were 45.2 per cent higher over the year to January 2014 compared to the national figures of just 28 per cent over the same period. Building starts are also up, reflecting boosted confidence in Queensland's construction industry. There is more to come to create the most efficient and effective planning and development system in Australia. The next cab off the rank will be the planning for Queensland's development bill, which will simplify Queensland's planning and development system and replace the cumbersome Sustainable Planning Act 2009. We will continue to consult and work with councils, businesses and stakeholders to drive the necessary reforms. We are getting on with ensuring Queensland remains a great state with great opportunity.