

The IAQ Assembly: A Recap

The Assembly started with a warm welcome to the country and an opening address from our CEO, Louise van Ristell.

The Opening Address from Steven Miles

Queensland's Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure, Steven Miles outlined what he described as the state's 'Golden Decade'.

Unemployment is low, our population is booming, and we have a large budget surplus and an unrivalled lifestyle in the Sunshine State. Add the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games to this, and Queensland certainly does have a Golden Decade pending.

The Deputy Premier's Government views the Games and the growth it'll bring as an opportunity for new and better infrastructure. The Government has delivered \$96 bn in capital investment and committed another \$89 bn over the next four years, as outlined in 'The Big Build' program.

Funding for new hospitals, renewable energy, transport, internet, homes and existing projects like the Bruce Highway upgrades and Cross-River Rail. The Deputy Premier also unveiled DSDILGP's new website for 'The Big Build' which will allow Queenslanders to see how projects near them will benefit their communities.

The Games, which will reach more than 5 billion viewers from over 200 countries, were described as a catalyst to transform Brisbane and Queensland. They'll deliver over \$8.1 bn in economic and social benefits to the state and \$17.6 bn to the nation as a whole. This means 91,000 new jobs for Queenslanders per year and 123,000 per annum across Australia. Infrastructure developed for the Games is not simply that either, it will be developed with 'legacy' - namely, benefiting Queenslanders post-Games - in mind.

The Games are also viewed, by the State Government, as a way to pursue Queensland's renewable energy revolution. The renewable energy to power the Games and the infrastructure developed to facilitate it will be climate-positive. The SuperGrid is a key component of this - Queensland needs new wind blades and towers, solar racks, batteries and transmission lines. This is without even mentioning the world-leading Pioneer-Burdekin Hydro Project.

IAQ wants to thank Steven for his wonderful presentation. Queensland's infrastructure industry will ensure that it truly is a 'Golden Decade'.

Session One: Games - Delivery

Following the keynote presentation from RPS Regional Manager, Nick Johnson, he was joined by Transurban Queensland General Manager Chris Poynter, and DSDILGP Senior Executive Director, Damon Hall.

The 'Delivering the Games' session focused on critical aspects of planning for precincts, mobility, accessibility, and ensuring a seamless and enjoyable experience for athletes, spectators and the community alike. Our experts delved into the world of delivering infrastructure for major sporting events like the Games and explored cutting-edge strategies, new technologies and evidenced-based practice to optimise the 2032 experience.

Reducing any risk of budget blowouts was also touched upon, and Damon Hall reinforced that the planning for funding and cost estimation models are factoring in all variables, and government is taking the time to ensure a seamless development. We're also simply building assets within the city footprint that are well connected to transport, which will drive bigger aspirations than the Games alone. Queensland has been smart, and chosen to invest in projects the state would have invested in regardless of the Games.

This is an opportunity to put Brisbane on the map and make Queensland a global leader in delivering world-class sporting events; a legacy for our infrastructure industry to aspire towards.

Session Two: Games - Legacy

Our second keynote speaker was Vice President at Jacobs, Suzanne McCormack, who has over 20 years of experience in steering and project managing international events and urban development projects.

The presentation opened with Jacobs World Games Experience, of which there are many. These include but are not limited to the 2010 Vancouver Games, the 2022 Qatar World Cup and COP28.

Suzanne then elaborated on a series of Legacy examples from major sporting events Jacobs delivered. Legacy examples from each are listed below:

London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

- 110,000 jobs created across host boroughs since 2012
- 1 mn visitors every year to Olympic Park

- 225 hectares of parkland and open space in addition to 5 world-class sporting venues
- 39% rail increase in passenger journeys
- \$25.6 bn of economic benefit concerning investment and tourism
- 75% of contracts awarded to SMEs through CompeteFor which opened up opportunities for all SMEs to engage in procurement

Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games

- \$40 mn in apprenticeship funding
- 400 jobs for unemployed persons in the local community
- 1500 new homes
- 780 school-to-club links
- 74 community sports clubs
- \$610 mn invested in new and improved sports-related facilities across the city

Dubai Expo 2020

- 33% reduction in water consumption
- 1 mn student visits through the Expo Schools Program
- 12,000 residential community within the legacy 15-minute city
- \$6.8 bn contracts awarded to SMEs
- \$41 bn in gross value added in events organisation, business services and retail
- 662,000 jobs in Post-Expo City

As for Brisbane 2032, Suzanne emphasised looking 10 years beyond the Games, and imagining what Brisbane will look like during and after. The legacy of 2032 is critical and has the ability to catalyse a transformation in the way the world views Brisbane and Queensland.

Suzanne was then joined by the Director at Costello Consulting, Cameron Costello, Queensland Government Architect Leah Lang and Program Director at the Department of Environment and Science, Michael Whitehead for the panel discussion.

The panellists navigated the path to digitalising the Games, acknowledged and explored the importance of First Nations' voice, and outlined what they believe will be Brisbane's legacy from 2032. These involved social benefits, environmental outcomes including emissions reductions, pathways to Games participation for Torres Strait Islander persons, new cultural centres, landmark venues, walkability, physical and mental health wellbeing improvements and lasting international acclaim.

Session Three: SEQ and Regional Queensland - Sustainability for the Future

Session three began with a keynote presentation from the Head of Strategy Performance (Pre-Contracts) and Acting Head of Strategy and Affairs at Inland Rail Johanna Marsh. Johanna emphasised the importance of environmentally resilient infrastructure and relayed her experiences in projects in Beaudesert Town Centre, the lessons from severe flooding delays there, and how Inland Rail has learnt from them.

Inland Rail prioritises environmental resilience to safeguard economic and civilian life. The Project, from Brisbane to Melbourne, will keep pace with increasing freight rail demand and cut times between the major cities from 33 to 24 hours. Inland Rail minimises the use of new resources and instead opts to reduce waste and landfill by using reusable and recycled materials. This is in addition to using solar signalling.

Inland Rail will further improve transport sustainability by reducing the number of long haul trucks between Brisbane and Melbourne by 200,000 and using freight trains instead, which is four times more fuel-efficient than road transport. Inland Rail is also built by Australia, for Australians, and has and will continue to act as a catalyst for regional development with a myriad of employment opportunities. The overwhelming majority of inputs will be sourced from the local communities. \$386 mn has been spent with local businesses, and a significant proportion of this has been with First Nations businesses.

Johanna was later joined by Queensland's Chief Entrepreneur, Julia Spicer OAM, CEO of Business Chamber Queensland, Heidi Cooper, and Senior Officer in DSDILGP's Regional Strategy Group, William Hyams.

The four industry leaders explored:

- Strategies and initiatives driving sustainable development across Queensland
- Discussed innovative delivery models for regional infrastructure
- Examined how transformative projects are not only enhancing sustainability but fostering economic growth and job creation in regional areas
- Spoke to the challenges regional women face when it comes to getting meaningful participation in leadership roles, and how we can empower regional women in the traditionally male-dominated sector

Emphasised by all were understanding family problems as community problems, opening up businesses and policies to encourage diversity, understanding needs by region rather than using a broad brush for all, using regional businesses for local components of large-scale projects, governing to encourage innovative solutions and developing regulatory frameworks that facilitate sustainable business practices.

Session Four: SEQ and Regional Queensland - Connection and Liveability

The Liveability and Connection in SEQ and Regional Queensland saw a keynote presentation from our very own CIT Chairperson and Principal of Commercial Advisory at Aurecon, Robbie Claase.

Robbie outlined the challenges faced by those outside of Southeast Queensland's major hubs. There are significant inequalities when it comes to health, housing, public transport, educational opportunities and more.

It is clear that regional Queenslanders find it harder to get a well-recognised degree and qualifications, have seriously limited housing options that also limit employment, are hampered by infrequent and disconnected public transport networks, and often have to drive and then wait far too long for to get critical health appointments. Social infrastructure is fundamental to the well-being of Queenslanders, particularly those outside our major cities.

The panel session that followed saw Robbie, alongside, the Executive Director at Queensland Health, Paul Emmett, CEO of Gunawuna Jangai Kieran Smith, Founder and Managing Director at National Affordable Housing, Mike Myers, and leader of the IRS Group at DSDILGP, Leah Kelly.

Leah expanded on the Big Build and how this aims to provide the jobs, growth and economic prosperity required to improve social infrastructure in the regions, and in SEQ. Over 65% of the spending on the Big Build is in Queensland's regions. Leah also emphasised the importance of modern methods of construction (MMC) in delivering projects. Following this, Paul outlined the \$15 bn investment in health infrastructure and a broad range of associated programs and initiatives within 'the Big Build'. Additional hospitals, staff, beds and medicines in rural Queensland, will alleviate the health inequalities in the regions.

Mike began by speaking to the nexus between positive housing outcomes, and education, economic and health outcomes. Poor housing outcomes almost always result in declines across all the other major socioeconomic markers. He also spoke to the increasing proportion of renters and the lack of housing affordability across Australia's economic hubs. To remedy this, Mike emphasised the importance of a 'build-to-rent' sector, a major infrastructure investment in housing, bringing private and public capital together in the regions, and stopping relying too much on small communities to raise the necessary funds for such projects.

Session Five: Energy - Carbon Community and the Circular Economy

The session saw a keynote presentation from the Global Solution Director of Sustainability, Resilience and Climate Response at Jacobs, Daniel Render.

Daniel was heavily involved in the 2020 Dubai Expo, and many others across the 29 years as a registered architect and sustainability professional.

He outlined that decarbonisation is not the only challenge to major projects and that the process is inexorably linked with other issues. A more holistic approach is needed: which holds the primary goal as leaving a better world for future generations. Also important is looking beyond the electricity grid and individual assets (i.e., buildings), and transitioning to a multi-stakeholder approach, which can help cities and regions decarbonise more effectively and efficiently.

The panel discussion that followed heard from Daniel, as well as Partner of PwC Australia and PwC Indigenous Consulting Selwyn Button, General Manager of Energy Solutions and Power at APA Group Matthew Forrest, and Deputy Director General of the Energy Division at the Department of Energy and Public David Shankey.

The takeaway was that Queensland, with its unique and vast natural resources and innovative mindset, could transform its energy landscape and become a global leader in clean energy solutions. A focus on strategic enabling to deliver decarbonisation and embracing a circular economy will drive the likelihood of this conclusion up and up. This generation has the ability to set up the next generations of Queensland for the next century and beyond. Hydro projects like Pioneer-Burdekin, critical minerals projects, and solar and wind infrastructure expansion, are the foundation of this generation's renewable transition.

It is not simply a moral goal to aspire to: there are significant opportunities for businesses across the delivery and lifecycle of projects. This does, however, require commitment from the government to help businesses pursue these opportunities; they should engage from the beginning, build relationships and collaborate better with the private sector and indigenous communities, and keep in mind that answers to questions differ by community.

Session Six: Energy - Queensland Leaning into a Future Economy

The energy sessions continued with keynote speaker and Front-End Energy Transactions Partner at Norton Rose Fulbright, Kate Muller.

Kate opened a thought-provoking session on the dynamic landscape of Queensland's energy industry and its pivotal role in shaping a prosperous future economy. There are unique advantages in Queensland like the level of government support (i.e., Energy and Jobs Plan), geography for

hydrogen projects, reliable international connections and a largely untapped well of critical minerals that are going to grow demand as the renewable transition furthers globally.

Joining Kate as panellists were Managing Director (APAC) at Power Systems Consultants Ashley Grohn, Director-General of DSDILGP, Mike Kaiser, and Senior Associate for Clean Energy at Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC), Harini Warriar.

The panellists discussed a series of topics ranging from nuclear energy possibilities to social licences, ESG investing to pumped-hydro, and community power banks to business cases.

Deputy Director, Mike Kaiser, emphasised that while we certainly do not need to 'pull everything down', there are key developments in renewable infrastructure that need to be made to ensure an effective, just and sustainable transition to net zero. The decarbonising of the electricity grid, while being a noble goal to reduce global emissions, is fundamental to ensuring Queensland's global competitiveness. This, for many in government, is the key motivation (alongside the virtuous goal of reducing emissions).

As other countries seek to increase their energy export competitiveness, we must do the same and more. We have the potential, in Mike's words, to be 'World Beaters' in the energy export industry. The Energy and Jobs Plan is one of the first steps in becoming a 'World Beater'.

Session Seven: Beyond 2032

In our final, and perhaps most inspiring session, the Global Market Director for Sports and Entertainment at Jacobs and former AFL player and All-Australian winner, Beau Waters, kicked us off by outlining the importance of sport throughout his childhood, which he described as otherwise very challenging.

Beau outlined his aspirations for 'something bigger', which came, in part, in his position at Jacobs. Driving positive change in accessibility, mobility, connectivity, equality and community growth. Sport and infrastructure have and will continue to bring together a diverse range of people to unite towards the aforementioned shared goals, and improve the lives of countless individuals.

Following this, Beau was joined by the CEO of Paralympics Australia, Catherine Clark, PwC's Selwyn Button, and facilitators, Building Services Section Lead at Jacobs, Jack Buffington, and Civil and Aviation Sector Lead at Jacobs, Alannah Bolster.

Panellists discussed the potential Games experience for Queenslanders from varying backgrounds including First Nations, disabled persons, the youth and socioeconomically disadvantaged. Drawing

on global mega-events, the panel demonstrated the invaluable lessons that Queensland must use to create a world-class Games and subsequent infrastructure legacy. We can capitalise on this momentum to bring people together, Close the Gap, and make Queensland the tourism and infrastructure envy of the sporting world.

The session finished with a keynote presentation from Catherine, who is a passionate believer in the power of sport to further humanity, and unite, strengthen, inspire and catalyse change in the short term and for decades to come. She emphasised the power of inclusion via sport and painted the picture as to why the Games in 2032 should be a catalyst for new enduring disability standards in every facet. This is 'winning big'.

We closed with a Q&A with gold medal-winning Australian Paralympian, Rachel Watson, who took home the prize in Tokyo 2020.

By outlining the challenges faced by the Paralympian community, Rachel capped off an incredible day of learning, engagement and experience-sharing. Queensland is certainly in excellent hands and will be in equally good hands as time goes on, judging by our emerging leaders.