



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

STATE BUDGET 2011 – EDUCATION & ENVIRONMENT

BUDGET CONTAINS MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS

Hinchinbrook MP, Andrew Cripps, says the Bligh Labor Government's budget contained more questions than answers for his electorate in the areas of Education and the Environment, with capital funding to schools cut and previous projects lost altogether.

Mr Cripps said he was very concerned about an apparent cut of \$300,000 from the capital budget to construct a new kindergarten at Bluewater State School on Townsville's growing Northern Beaches, with the previous allocation of \$1.5 million falling to \$1.2 million.

"I'm also concerned about the timeframe for the replacement of B Block at Tully State High School, which was destroyed by Cyclone Yasi. While \$6.3 million for a new building is in the budget, it is not due to be spent until 2012, which doesn't make sense" said Mr Cripps.

"This issue needs to be clarified immediately by the Minister for Education. The Minister also needs to explain why there are no capital allocations in the budget for the refurbishment of D Block and the Manual Arts building at Tully State High School" he said.

Mr Cripps said he continued to be concerned about the absence of any allocation in the 2011-12 budget for the new Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service Ranger Station in Cardwell, which was first promised by the Bligh Labor Government in the 2008-09 budget.

"This project is long overdue. It appears that the new QPWS Ranger Station in Cardwell has disappeared altogether from the budget papers, despite the fact that it has not been delivered three budget cycles after it was first promised. It's disgraceful" said Mr Cripps.

"The Bligh Labor Government plans to spend \$3.6 million over the coming financial year to increase the size of the National Park in Queensland and yet, it has still not spent the \$620,000 it promised three years ago to build a new Ranger Station in Cardwell" he said.

Mr Cripps said he did not believe the Bligh Labor Government could justify increasing Queensland's National Park estate by 350,000 hectares over the next 12 months when it has failed to deliver the basic infrastructure required to maintain existing protected areas.

Contact:	Andrew Cripps MP Member for Hinchinbrook	Address:	PO Box 1515 Ingham Qld 4850	Ph:	07 4776 1428
		E-mail:	Hinchinbrook@parliament.qld.gov.au	Fax:	07 4776 3503
