

**Premier & Trade
The Hon. Peter Beattie MP**

19 June 2005

QUEENSLAND TO BE A WORLD CENTRE FOR R&D OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT

Philadelphia: The Queensland Government will further expand the Smart State's booming aviation hub with two major developments involving unmanned aircraft, Premier Peter Beattie revealed today.

"We will provide funding to help make Brisbane the Australian centre for research and development of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles - or UAVs as they are known," said Mr Beattie.

"And Kingaroy Airfield, with access to a vast amount of sparsely populated airspace, will be used as a flight operations and test centre for UAVs.

"Queensland University of Technology and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation are working with the Queensland Government and several other organisations to establish Queensland as a world-wide centre for UAV system development.

"Boeing Australia strongly endorses this project and will participate in the initiative.

"UAVs comprise a significant aerospace research and development opportunity that is not being pursued by any other State.

"We have already made Queensland a major aviation hub through creating more than 5,000 new jobs in the industry since 1998.

"We believe these two projects will help to continue that jobs growth and the development of the aviation hub.

"Today I am announcing funding of \$3.53 million to Queensland University of Technology towards the creation of a \$12 million Australian Research Centre for Aerospace Automation at the Da Vinci Precinct at Brisbane Airport."

Minister for State Development and Innovation Tony McGrady said: "Research will focus on development and commercialisation of UAVs in Queensland, with safe civilian applications including coastal surveillance, power line inspection, precision farming and remote sensing.

"This centre will create an ideal environment for QUT and the CSIRO to develop a critical mass of world-class researchers to lead civil UAV research.

"The \$3.53 million will be used to construct a purpose-built facility, including laboratories and test equipment, research space for 40 research and development staff, and a hangar for assembly, testing and other uses.

"It will also support an outdoor operational laboratory for ground-based operations and low-level hovering operations, and acquisition and equipping of a mobile operations centre for sustained remote-area UAV flight testing."

Mr Beattie said: "Queensland University of Technology applied for funding from the State Government under the Smart State Research Facilities Fund and it is particularly

appropriate for me to announce it today in Philadelphia.

"QUT held a major function here to publicise its expertise in biotechnology so I was able to congratulate Vice-Chancellor Peter Coaldrake and other senior QUT personnel on their success in obtaining the \$3.53 million.

"And immediately afterwards I met senior executives of the Boeing Corporation which has strongly recommended the establishment of Kingaroy as a flight operations and test centre.

"The Kingaroy initiative has been activated through Kingaroy Shire Council, the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and Queensland's Department of State Development and Innovation.

"An area of 30 nautical miles wide, 300 nautical miles long and up to a 50,000 feet ceiling to the north-west of Kingaroy will be designated a UAV test and training area.

"There will also be a 'common user' UAV facility at Kingaroy airfield as part of this initiative.

"Globally, this market is recognised to be the next revolution in aviation as information technology matures in the aerospace sector."

Mr Beattie is leading a major trade, biotechnology and investment mission to the USA and Italy.

Source: <http://statements.cabinet.qld.gov.au/cgi-bin/display-statement.pl?id=7272&db=media>