

## Selling the Sunshine State: The Role of an Australian State Government and Its Central Agency, 1859–2002

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In his 'Welcome to Queensland', Premier Peter Beattie declares 'We're Australia's Smart State, tourism leader and home of Big Events ... Our natural assets are legendary ... Our business advantages are obvious ... To live, to play, to prosper ... Queensland has it all'.<sup>1)</sup> Such forthright sentiments are typical of Beattie, who is well known within Australia for his enthusiasm about his home state. His comments, however, may also be understood as a recent example of a process which began more than 140 years ago—government attempts to market 'the Sunshine State' of Queensland. Assessing those promotional activities across fourteen decades offers insights into particular domestic issues and reveals some key continuities as well as significant changes in Queensland's relations with the rest of the world.

It seems especially appropriate to focus on the government's role. While private companies and individuals in Queensland also, of course, undertake promotional work, one of the features of Australia that is remarked upon by academics and others is the extent and significance of government. Since white Australia's establishment as a penal colony in 1788, the role of government has been fundamental and Australia remains, in terms of its proportion of politicians to the population and its three levels of government, a very governed—some would argue over-governed—society. Journalist David Dale describes Australia, with one full-time politician per 20,000 citizens, as 'the most governed nation on earth'.<sup>2)</sup> Each level of government has its own workforce. In addition to federal and local government employees, Queenslanders are served by more than 175,000 public servants in some twenty state government departments.<sup>3)</sup> Focussing on Queensland also draws attention, almost by default, to the relationships among the Australian states and between those states and the federal government. The creation of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901 in no way overcame the rivalries that had developed during the 1800s among the former colonies (renamed states in 1901). Instead, it introduced a new level of administration against which the states would compete. Across the twentieth century the Commonwealth acquired power and the states lost power, but the role of the latter remains crucial.

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<sup>1)</sup> 'Welcome to Queensland', About the Premier, [www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/about/index.htm](http://www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/about/index.htm), 2002.

<sup>2)</sup> David Dale, *The 100 Things Everyone Needs to Know about Australia*, rev. ed., Sydney, Pan Macmillan, 1999, p. 45; see also Rodney Hall, *Abolish the States*, Sydney, Pan Macmillan, 1998, pp. 22–23.

<sup>3)</sup> Queensland Public Service Commissioner's Annual Report, 2000–2001, p. 40; these figures do not include employees of government owned corporations such as Queensland Rail.

While the last two decades have witnessed efforts to transform Australia into what social analyst Boris Frankel calls a 'modern nationwide market society' within an era of globalisation, the states have continued to promote themselves vigorously overseas, competing against each other for migrants, export opportunities, investment and tourists. Frankel argues that 'the historical pattern of interstate trade and economic development is being downgraded in favour of building State-based industries which are often more oriented to global markets than to other State economies within the Australian national market'.<sup>4</sup> The Queensland government's promotion of the Sunshine State offers support for Frankel's position. At the same time, an historical analysis of those marketing activities demonstrates that current trends in state-based competition for international markets and investment represent an intensification of longer-term patterns, rather than a new phenomenon.

It is also evident that the number of government ministers and departments in Australia that are involved in promoting their states has increased. One hundred years ago in Queensland the Premier's Department was the central point of contact for government promotion of the state internationally. Some other agencies participated in this activity, often in liaison with the Premier's Department. The Department of Agriculture, for example, produced photographs and films to encourage migrants to choose Queensland as their destination as well as providing material for displays at international exhibitions. The Railways Department helped to design itineraries for visiting dignitaries. Today several Queensland government departments have key roles in promoting the state overseas. Some, notably the Department of State Development (DSD), are newly created; others, such as the Department of Education, can trace their origins to the nineteenth century but have entered the world of international promotions only recently.

The participation of more departments in promotional work is directly linked to domestic and international trends including an increase in the number of state government departments, and the nature of the Queensland and global economies. Queensland now seeks to earn export dollars through services as well as its traditional primary products. Thus the Department of Education has emerged as a player in marketing activities as Queensland, like the other Australian states and many countries, seeks to sell local educational services to overseas students.

This article focuses on Queensland's central government agency, the Premier's Department, and, to a lesser extent, the Department of State Development which, in 1998, assumed a series of roles previously associated with the Premier's Department. This transfer is just one example of numerous variations in the range of responsibilities of the Premier's Department across fourteen decades. Even the name of the department has changed. Currently the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, it traces its lineage to the Colonial Secretary's Office, which was established in 1859. While its roles have altered, sometimes dramatically over 140

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<sup>4</sup> Boris Frankel, *When the Boat Comes In: Transforming Australia in the Age of Globalisation*, Annandale, Pluto Press, 2001, p. 27.

years, one of its constant functions has been 'selling the Sunshine State' to the world.

### The Colonial Era: 1859–1900

Today Queensland is the third most populous of the Australian states; its 3.7 million citizens occupy an area five times the land mass of Japan. In December 1859, when it was declared a separate colony within the British Empire, there were only 23,500 European citizens and perhaps 60,000 Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. There were an estimated two million sheep, 300,000 cattle and 20,000 horses. Secondary industry was limited to a few small factories. Brisbane, the capital, boasted just 914 dwellings and was described by Queensland's first Governor as 'little better than a village of wood'.<sup>5)</sup> The colony's new administration consisted of three departments with ministerial heads: the Attorney-General's Office, Treasury and the Colonial Secretary's Office. The last was the most important, assuming any functions not specifically allocated to the other departments. By the end of December, the first Colonial Secretary, Robert Herbert, oversaw a central office of three public servants and several sub-departments.

One of the first priorities was to secure migrants for the colony. The government immediately assumed that Britain would be its primary source of new settlers although it also investigated migration schemes from continental Europe. In 1860 Henry Jordan was appointed Emigration Commissioner; from 1864 his title became Agent-General for Emigration to Queensland. Despite significant disruptions to his work, notably the closure of the Agent-General's Office in England for three years in the late 1860s after a financial crisis in Queensland, the attraction of migrants to Queensland remained the core function of the Agent-General from the 1860s to the 1880s. Jordan and his successors employed two main strategies—lecturing to would-be migrants and writing articles praising Queensland in the local press.

The government soon expanded its promotional activities as it sought to secure capital as well as labour for the new colony. To this end, Queensland participated in thirty-one international exhibitions between 1862, when it was represented at the London Exhibition, and 1901. A number of government departments were involved in international exhibitions, with the Premier's Department often assuming a key role; the Premier determined the exhibitions at which Queensland would be represented and how much money could be spent on the colony's displays. Many of the exhibitions were held in Britain, and the Agent-General was responsible for overseeing Queensland's involvement in these events. Queensland's displays typically focused on what Premier Samuel Griffith described in 1892 as 'raw products of nature in bulk'.<sup>6)</sup>

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<sup>5)</sup> Letter from Governor Bowen to Edward Cardwell, 2 July 1865, Queensland State Archives (QSA), GOV/24.

<sup>6)</sup> Quoted in Judith Mackay, 'A good show: Colonial Queensland at international exhibitions' *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum Cultural Heritage Series*, Vol. 1, Part 2, 1998, p. 200.

They emphasised the colony's agricultural, pastoral and mineral resources.

The success of promotional strategies in the nineteenth century was not a given, although the officials involved in Queensland's displays at exhibitions were effusive about their impact. In 1862, for example, Commissioner Matthew Marsh declared that: 'I think the Exhibition has done wonders in bringing the Colony into notice. Within my knowledge, it has induced great numbers to emigrate to Queensland, many of them with considerable capital'.<sup>7</sup> Later evaluations, however, suggest that Queensland's participation in these exhibitions had little effect on investment, immigration or trade.<sup>8</sup>

The Queensland government also had to contend with factors at home and in Britain which limited the appeal of migration in general, and the appeal of migration to Queensland in particular. Describing the work of emigration lecturer George Randall, the Agent-General reported that in 1889 Randall had held 266 meetings in England and Scotland:

His duties have frequently been of an arduous nature, entailing long journeys by road in inclement weather, between parishes not connected by railway. Sometimes, also, he has been disheartened by the small attendance at his meetings through the bad state of the weather, and at other times through an improved demand for farm labourers, thereby removing the necessity for them to turn their attention to emigration.<sup>9</sup>

In 1892, as Queensland plunged into economic depression, the government suspended its free and assisted immigration schemes. Efforts to secure full fee-paying migrants met with only limited success and Randall commented in 1893 that 'the late floods and bank disasters had a very discouraging effect upon people against emigration to Queensland'.<sup>10</sup>

During the 1890s the Agent-General's roles expanded as he assumed a more active role in supporting commercial activities in the colony by promoting Queensland products, investigating possible markets for Queensland businesses, assessing the competition they would encounter, and reporting on the success or otherwise of selected items. In 1895 the Acting Agent-General Charles Dicken reported that 'Correspondence between the public and this office on trade matters and subjects of commercial interest is increasing'.<sup>11</sup> Commercial agents were hired to represent Queensland in Germany and in southern Europe.

While Dicken and his successors were enthusiastic about the colony's products, they were also quick to note problems. Dicken reported in 1895 that brokers had dismissed a consignment of Queensland honey as 'of very inferior quality, with an unpleasant flavour' and advised that only the finest honey should be sent.<sup>12</sup> Two years later he acknowledged that a shipment

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Mackay, 'A good show', p. 183.

<sup>8</sup> Mackay, 'A good show', pp. 283-293.

<sup>9</sup> Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for the year 1889, *Queensland Legislative Assembly Votes and Proceedings (QLA V&P)*, 1890, Vol. 2, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for the year 1893, *QLA V&P*, 1894, Vol. 2, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for the year 1895, *QLA V&P*, 1896, Vol. 3, p. 3.

of mangoes, including a presentation case for Queen Victoria, had arrived in fair condition but noted that brokers had recommended against future shipments, 'the fruit only being known and appreciated by persons who have lived in the tropics'.<sup>13)</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth century the Queensland government, and specifically the Premier's Department, had established key features of 'selling the sunshine state' which would persist through much of the twentieth century. The department was seeking to market Queensland as a destination for migrants and for capital while also promoting commercial interests in the colony. Britain, and to a lesser extent Europe, remained the focus of most of this effort, but there were interesting hints that at times Queensland could be more economically hard-headed than the other Australian colonies as it sought non-British markets. In the 1890s, for example, when racism in Queensland society was virulent and widespread, Queensland was the only Australian colony to agree to the Anglo-Japanese Treaty. While the Queensland government secured concessions in exchange for its agreement, the other Australian governments subordinated their desire for the opportunities offered by the Treaty to their fear of Japanese migration to Australia.<sup>14)</sup>

### Federation and Beyond: 1901-1945

With the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901, it seemed that the 'external' functions of the former colonies - now renamed 'states' - would be truncated. The Commonwealth, for example, assumed responsibility for Australia's defence forces and for immigration policy.<sup>15)</sup> Yet the states kept some 'external' functions. Queensland retained the Agent-General's Office in London and continued its involvement in immigration although it had to abide by Commonwealth laws and regulations including the White Australia Policy.<sup>16)</sup> The Queensland parliament debated the future of the Agent-General in 1902 with Premier Robert Philp declaring that 'there was an immense amount of work to be done' by the Agent-General.<sup>17)</sup> He considered that Queensland would require an overseas representative in London until the Commonwealth appointed an Agent-General for Australia. In fact, the Queensland Agent-

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<sup>12)</sup> Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for the year 1895, *QLA V&P*, 1896, Vol. 3, p. 9.

<sup>13)</sup> Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for the year 1897, *QLA V&P*, 1898, Vol. 2, p. 11.

<sup>14)</sup> The positions adopted by Australian colonial governments and private commercial interests toward trade and migration involving Japan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were complex. See David Walker, *Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850-1939*, St Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 1999, Chapter 6.

<sup>15)</sup> Successive Australian governments seemed to have little interest in developing an independent foreign policy in the first decades of the twentieth century and Australia did not adopt the Statute of Westminster (1932), which declared the independence of the Dominions from Britain, until 1942.

<sup>16)</sup> The deportation under federal law of most Pacific Islanders employed in Queensland's sugar industry as part of the White Australia Policy, was one cause of early tensions between the Queensland and Commonwealth governments.

<sup>17)</sup> *Queensland Parliamentary Debates (QPD)*, Vol. 89, 6 August 1902, p. 260.

General's Office existed under that name until the 1990s when it became the state's Trade and Investment Office in London.

In the first decade of the twentieth century the Agent-General continued to be at the forefront of promoting Queensland as a destination for investment and migrants as well as publicising its products. In 1902 Agent-General Horace Tozer summarised his 'mission to Great Britain' as including 'the object of procuring people and capital to develop the resources of Queensland'. The federal government's assumption of responsibility for immigration from 1901 posed some difficulties, and Tozer referred to 'the uphill work for any one State to promote Australian emigration at its own expense, in face of the restrictive legislation of the Commonwealth, and the unprecedented competition of Canada and South Africa'. Tozer remained committed to his role, though, and declared 'there is hardly a day or evening, especially in the season, in which in some form I do not advertise Queensland by my presence and speech'.<sup>18)</sup>

Another problem arose in the early 1920s, when conservatives in Queensland and Britain cooperated to ensure an embargo on loans from Britain to Queensland. The actions of Queensland labour governments, including their support for state-run enterprises and the abolition of the state's upper house of parliament, prompted questions about Queensland's loyalty to the British Empire. The state government sought to reassure Britain through promotional activities in that country and at home, and the Premier's Department put considerable effort, time and money into selling Queensland through overseas exhibitions and hospitality for influential visitors.

Within the Australian pavilion at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition, the Queensland government highlighted a distinctly Queensland image to potential investors and migrants, emphasising the state's natural attractions. Queensland sent a display of shells, starfish and coral from the Great Barrier Reef together with fifty opossum skins. The use of Queensland or Australian motifs in promotional campaigns was also evident in domestic activities. In 1926 the Empire Parliamentary Association met in Brisbane. The Queensland Premier's private secretary used the facilities of the Premier's Department to organise rail journeys and catering for members of the Association. He also arranged for gifts to remind them of their stay in Queensland:

I am sending by parcel post, a number of boomerangs (16) for distribution amongst the members of the Empire Parliamentary Delegation. Certain members of the Delegation have already received specimens of this native weapon, and the Premier thought other representatives might like to accept this souvenir of their visit to Queensland.<sup>19)</sup>

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<sup>18)</sup> Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for the year 1902, *Queensland Parliamentary Papers (QPP)*, 1903, Vol. 2, pp. 2-3, 5.

<sup>19)</sup> Letter from Pike to Gale, NSW Honorary Secretary of the Empire Parliamentary Association, 15 October 1926, QSA A/6237.

The chance to advertise Queensland as a safe and suitable site for investment and migration during the delegates' visit was exploited with journeys along the Queensland coast and to the Great Barrier Reef islands.

While the Agent-General and others involved in the promotion of Queensland were almost unflinchingly positive about their work, others expressed concern. In 1929 Queensland parliamentarian, James Fry, commented generally on the role of Australia's Agents-General who 'show only the good qualities of this country and none of the reverses we suffer. Not a word is said about droughts, about the hardships of going on the land and meeting with reverses, and getting knocked back, and having to start again'.<sup>20)</sup>

From the late 1920s, the Agent-General's Office began to emphasise Queensland's status as a tourist destination. In 1929 a display promoting the Great Barrier Reef was so attractive that 'numerous inquirers have expressed a desire to purchase samples of the coral exhibited in our display window'.<sup>21)</sup> The first specific mention of tourism by the Agent-General occurred in 1930 during the depths of the Great Depression. Conditions in Queensland were then so bad that the assisted passage system for British migrants was suspended. Perhaps the foregrounding of tourism marked the projection of future hope rather than the reality of shrinking markets and economic downturn. The Agent-General reported that 'more interest is being displayed in Queensland from a tourist point of view, and many requests for detailed information concerning the Great Barrier Reef have been dealt with from time to time'.<sup>22)</sup> He commented that:

In many European countries the tourist traffic is regarded as a valuable industry, and in Queensland we have what I visualise as a great wealth-producer for the State. The Great Barrier Reef is claiming more and more attention in this country from the tourist point of view, and our displays of coral and other reef products have helped considerably in this direction.<sup>23)</sup>

Following a hiatus in the promotion of Queensland during the Second World War, the Agent-General was optimistic about future prospects for both migration and tourism:

In this postwar period, when frontiers have not the same meaning or significance as formerly, and when modern transport methods have brought about revolutionary changes in the lives of people, the urge to travel farther afield should bring into prominence the great attractions offered by Queensland to tourists and all those in search of 'fresh scenes and pastures new' far removed from the somewhat grim and foreboding conditions of present-day Europe.<sup>24)</sup>

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<sup>20)</sup> *QPD*, Vol. 153, 15 October 1929, p. 932.

<sup>21)</sup> Report of the Agent-General for the year 1929, *QPP*, 1930, Vol. 2, p. 2.

<sup>22)</sup> Report of the Agent-General for the year 1930, *QPP*, 1931, Vol. 2, p. 2.

<sup>23)</sup> Report of the Agent-General for the year 1933, *QPP*, 1934, Vol. 2, p. 2.

## The Shift to Asia

In the post-World War II era, the most significant change to the Queensland government's promotional activities was an expanded range of target countries, notably countries in Asia. Queensland, and Australia, had established earlier links with Asian countries, and by 1936 Japan was Australia's third largest trading partner. After the prohibition of trade with Japan during World War II, private trade between Australia and Japan recommenced from 1947 although Japanese people were not permitted to enter Australia until 1951, the same year in which Japan became Australia's fourth largest export destination.<sup>25)</sup> In 1954 the Queensland government entertained the Japanese Ambassador to Australia, Haruhiko Nishi, and from the 1960s onwards visits by government and business representative from Asian countries to Queensland became more common. In 1967 Japan replaced the United Kingdom as Australia's major export market; in the following year northeast Asia replaced the European Community as the top regional destination for Australian exports. The proportion of Australian imports from Asian countries also increased significantly.<sup>26)</sup>

Successive Queensland governments demonstrated their interest in Asian countries as destinations for exports and as sources for investment. The Co-ordinator-General's Department, originally created as a sub-department of the Premier's Department, contributed to the promotion of Queensland through its development of infrastructure for tourism and its role in major projects involving overseas investors. It was, for example, involved in the Iwasaki tourist resort at Yeppoon, the first major tourism development in Queensland by a Japanese company. Demonstrating the central and sometimes controversial role that the state government played in fostering overseas investment, the conservative Bjelke-Petersen government forced through legislation in an all-night parliamentary sitting in 1978 to enable it to purchase land and then sell that land to Iwasaki.

In the final decades of the twentieth century, even greater efforts were directed towards promoting Queensland internationally. The Queensland Government Representative Office was opened in Tokyo in 1980 to enhance relations between Queensland and Japan with an emphasis on trade, investment and tourism. Offices were later established in Bahrain, Los Angeles, Taiwan and Hong Kong. In the early 1980s the state government established the 'Enterprise Queensland' program to 'create a continuing awareness that Queensland is the leading State in Australia for exports and tourism; has the fastest growing economy and welcomes investment'.<sup>27)</sup> The wording of this statement deliberately positioned Queensland as superior to the rest of Australia, a strategy that continues to this day. The government

<sup>24)</sup> Report of the Agent-General for the year 1946, *QPP*, 1947-1948, Vol. 2, p. 3.

<sup>25)</sup> Sandra Wilson, 'Japanese-Australian relations' in Graeme Davison et al. eds. *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 356.

<sup>26)</sup> For an overview of Australian-Asian economic relations see Mark McGillivray, 'Australia's economic ties with Asia' in Mark McGillivray and Garry Smith, eds. *Australia and Asia*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 56-80.



departments of other states, of course, showcase their particular strengths.

Queensland sought to secure markets around the world but the Asia-Pacific region remained a prime focus. The state cooperated with the Commonwealth in various activities including participation in two international agricultural technology exhibitions in Malaysia in 1984. A visit by Premier Bjelke-Petersen to China in the same year was followed by the creation of a joint government/industry committee to increase trade between Queensland and China. The Premier's Department signed sister-state agreements with the Japanese Prefecture of Saitama and the Indonesian region of Central Java; Queensland has subsequently established similar arrangements with Shanghai, the Korean Province of Kyonggi, and South Carolina in the United States.

Cooperation with private enterprise was a core feature of overseas exhibitions during the 1980s. In 1985, for example, the Queensland Confederation of Industry organised the Enterprise Queensland Trade and Tourism Exhibition to Japan, which involved thirty-three Queensland companies. The Premier officiated at the opening ceremony and there were major displays by his department, the government-sponsored Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation and the Expo 88 Authority.

While the Premier's Department sought new markets in Asia, the Middle East and North America and endorsed an immigration program which emphasised business migrants, some of its strategies were reminiscent of much earlier attempts to sell Queensland. In the mid-1980s the Co-ordinator-General announced 'a major development in the overseas drive for exports, investments, tourists and business migrants' with the appointment of the firm Coopers Lybrand to represent the government in Hong Kong and southern China. The firm would 'actively promote public awareness of Queensland, consult with potential business investors and migrants, and research and provide information for the Queensland Government on suitable trade and investment opportunities in Hong Kong and the southern China provinces'.<sup>28)</sup> The role of Coopers Lybrand echoed roles which commercial agents had undertaken for Queensland in the nineteenth century.

Rivalry between Queensland and the other Australian states was a persistent feature of promotional efforts. The 1985 agricultural trade exhibition, AgChina, attracted a delegation from Queensland which 'was the only Government sponsored group from Australia and was afforded national status'.<sup>29)</sup> Stealing a march on the other Australian states was a cause for pride. Similarly, some state politicians and officials regarded Expo 88, the major promotional event for Queensland in the 1980s, as a means to demonstrate Queensland superiority. As Bjelke-Petersen sought to position Expo 88, and therefore Queensland, as the centre of Australia's Bicentenary celebrations, tensions mounted between the Commonwealth and Queensland governments.<sup>30)</sup> The Premier's Department was one of numerous agencies involved in prepara-

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<sup>27)</sup> The Co-ordinator-General, Queensland, Annual Report, 1982-83, *QPP*, p. 2.

<sup>28)</sup> The Co-ordinator-General, Queensland Annual Report 1984-85, *QPP*, Vol. 2, 1985-86, p. 1.

<sup>29)</sup> Premier's Department Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 1987, *QPP*, Vol. 3, p. 13.

tions for Expo 88. In concert with the Chamber of Commerce, for example, it helped to organise a Business Visitors Program which included a database to facilitate the establishment of links between local and overseas businesses. The media described the program as 'a corporate dating service' and a 'computer marriage broker'.<sup>31)</sup>

Expo 88 could trace its heritage to the international exhibitions of the nineteenth century. While some promotional activities echoed earlier events, others did not. A report in the late 1980s referred to the Agent-General's Office in London:

The new organizational structure, with its emphasis on trade and investment, reflects the changing nature of the times. Business Migration policies and modern business activities have changed from a local to international emphasis. The State's overseas offices need to be pro-active rather than re-active in this very competitive marketplace.<sup>32)</sup>

The emphasis on the Asia-Pacific region became more pronounced, although the department also explored opportunities in other parts of the world. The Trade and Investment Development Program played an important role in the 1990s. It was 'responsible for the formulation, implementation and co-ordination of the Government's export development and investment promotion programs, including the ongoing management of the Government's overseas offices and provision of policy direction to relevant agencies'.<sup>33)</sup> The Program encouraged an 'export culture' in Queensland. In the year ending June 1994 it dealt with more than 5,000 export enquiries, hosted eighty trade and investment missions from Asia, the Pacific and Europe and participated in sixty-three Queensland missions to overseas destinations. It also provided financial assistance of more than \$AU 1 million to companies under the Queensland Export Development Scheme.

Business opportunities were not oriented only towards overseas investment in Queensland. Regional and sub-regional secretariats operated as entry points for investment by the Queensland state government and private enterprise in overseas ventures. In 1994, for example, the Papua New Guinea/Oceania Secretariat of the Premier's Department helped establish contact with a gold mining operation in Lihir 'to maximise opportunities' for Queensland in that project.<sup>34)</sup>

The shift towards a 'whole-of-government' approach to public policy formulation and delivery during the mid-1990s had a notable effect on the Trade and Investment Development Program which now defined itself as a 'lead agency':

This acknowledges the important and legitimate responsibilities of other State

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<sup>30)</sup> Ironically, Bjelke-Petersen was forced to resign as Premier before Expo 88 began.

<sup>31)</sup> Newspaper clippings in Premier's Department File F 1561 I.

<sup>32)</sup> Premier's Department Annual Report for year ended 30 June 1988, *QPP*, Vol. 5, 1988-1989, p. 9.

<sup>33)</sup> Department of the Premier, Economic and Trade Development, Annual Report 1993-94, p. 7.

<sup>34)</sup> Department of the Premier, Economic and Trade Development, Annual Report 1994-95, p. 23.

Government agencies in the promotion of trade and investment, but ensures that such activities are properly co-ordinated and undertaken in a professional manner. The overall aim is to achieve whole-of-government policies, strategies and activities, greater efficiency and more professional and improved services to the business community.<sup>35)</sup>

The emphasis on a 'whole-of-government' approach seemed likely to consolidate the role of the Premier's Department in promoting Queensland because of that department's capacity to adopt a broader view of government activity than other state agencies. In 1996, however, the Premier's Department underwent a reorganisation which included the transfer of its economic and trade roles to another department. After nearly 140 years, the Agent-General's Office in London ceased to report directly to the Premier's Department. Yet conservative Premier Robert Borbidge and his successor, labour Premier Peter Beattie, remained vitally involved in the promotion of Queensland overseas. The transfer of particular agencies from the Premier's Department did not represent a downgrading of their significance.

The Department of State Development was created in 1998. It defines its mission as 'To work with business to grow Queensland into a globally competitive trading economy', a statement that immediately links the state's domestic concerns with the international sphere.<sup>36)</sup> The importance accorded this function as well as the ongoing role of the Premier is reflected in the fact that the internet home page for the Department of State Development is one of only two Queensland government department home pages that include an introduction by the Premier—the other is, of course, that of the Premier's own department. Moreover, the Trade Division of the Department of State Development reports directly to the Premier who is also the Minister for Trade. Among its myriad of functions, the department controls ten overseas Queensland Trade and Investment Offices located in Asia, Europe and North America and provides support for 'Special representatives' in Africa and the Middle East. The duties of overseas offices include attracting investment, business migrants and tourists, and facilitating the export of Queensland products and services, the latter including education, aged care and engineering services.

The Premier's Department itself continues its direct role in selling Queensland, notably through its Protocol Branch. In 1998–99 the branch oversaw forty-four visits to Queensland by foreign dignitaries and trade delegations, and provided support for four overseas tours by the Queensland Premier as well as two trips to Japan by Queensland youth groups. One of the Premier's tours in 1999 was to Japan. In a series of speeches, Beattie highlighted the 'trade, business investment and cultural ties' with Japan, and declared 'Japan is vital to our State's long-term future'. He identified the Queensland government's Tokyo representation as performing 'a key role in ensuring such a successful relationship'.<sup>37)</sup> In 2000, the Premier repeated such sentiments when he returned to Japan.

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<sup>35)</sup> Department of the Premier, Economic and Trade Development, Annual Report 1994–95, p. 30.

<sup>36)</sup> Department of State Development, Annual Report, 2000–20001, p. 9.

## Conclusion

Beattie's speeches in Japan in 1999 and 2000 highlight the extent to which the Queensland government's current promotion of the sunshine state incorporates key points of similarity with the earliest marketing activities of the colonial government. First, Beattie's central role in this process, despite the recent creation of the Department of State Development, indicates the ongoing role of the Premier's Department. Secondly, at the beginning of the twenty-first century Queensland continues to promote its primary resources, with Beattie informing an audience of Japanese businesspeople that Queensland is 'proud of our reputation for being an efficient and stable supplier of bulk commodities, and we want our valued customers to know that we are keen to continue doing business'.<sup>387</sup> Those remarks would have made perfect sense to nineteenth century Premier Samuel Griffith who referred to Queensland's 'raw products of nature in bulk'. Beattie's emphasis on Queensland as a 'stable supplier' echoes the efforts of the 1920s state labour government to foreground the state's reputation as a safe and attractive site for investment.

The current Premier's enthusiasm for his state also incorporates one of the oldest features of 'selling the Sunshine State' - claiming Queensland's superiority over the other Australian states. In a series of speeches in Osaka and Tokyo in 2000, for example, Beattie noted that Queensland was the only Australian state with an office in Osaka; declared that its economy was 'well ahead of the rest of Australia'; and explained that it was 'the first Australian State to put in place a system that allows more responsive packaging of tourist experiences for different segments of the tourism market in Japan'.<sup>389</sup>

Other features of Beattie's visits to Japan, however, highlight points of discontinuity with earlier promotional efforts. While emphasising Queensland's primary products, the Premier declared 'But I want it known that there is new direction, new commitment, and new opportunities' and explained his vision for Queensland as 'the Smart State' with investment in such industries as biotechnology.<sup>400</sup> In contrast to the marketing activities of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there is more emphasis on trade and investment and less emphasis on migrants; within this latter category the focus is on business migration. Additionally, the Premier's visits to Japan reflect one of the major changes to the Queensland government's promo-

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<sup>387</sup> Speech by Premier Peter Beattie, 'Queensland Business Partners', Tokyo, 12 October 1999, [www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/speeches/partners.htm](http://www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/speeches/partners.htm).

<sup>388</sup> Speech by Premier Beattie, 'Queensland Business Partners', Tokyo, 12 October 1999, [www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/speeches/partners.htm](http://www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/speeches/partners.htm).

<sup>389</sup> Addresses by Premier Peter Beattie to Osaka business leaders, Osaka, 22 November 2000 and to Queensland's major trading partners and Tourism Queensland representatives, Tokyo, 20 November 2000, [www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/trade-missions/japan/index.htm](http://www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/trade-missions/japan/index.htm). Similar themes had been presented in Beattie's speeches in Japan in 1999.

<sup>400</sup> Speech by Premier Peter Beattie, Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, 12 October 1999, [www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/speeches/partners.htm](http://www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/speeches/partners.htm).

tional work across 140 years: the shift from Britain to Asia. As Beattie himself commented, Queensland's economy is now 'well meshed with the Asia-Pacific'.<sup>41)</sup>

The Premier's speeches suggested an effort to be all things to all potential customers and investors in an era of globalisation. Some of his comments and some of the activities of his department and the Department of State Development would have been entirely comprehensible to Queensland's earliest premiers. Other aspects of those activities, however, are far removed from nineteenth century promotions: the embrace of the Asia-Pacific region, the range of services that Queensland now seeks to export, the priority accorded trade and investment over migration, and the sheer extent of marketing efforts by the government. While the promotion of Queensland has remained a constant feature of the work of the Premier's Department across 140 years, the nature and context of that promotion have undergone considerable change.

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<sup>41)</sup> Queensland Treasury Corporation presentation by Premier Beattie, Tokyo, 13 October 1999, [www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/trade-missions/sp-treasury.htm](http://www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/trade-missions/sp-treasury.htm).