




Speech By
Hon. Jeff Seeney

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Record of Proceedings, 2 April 2014

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Inland Rail Project

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (2.08 pm): Our government welcomes the Australian federal government's initiative to progress the inland rail project as nation-building infrastructure for our country's future. Inland rail is a critical investment which would support jobs and the future prosperity of our economy for future generations of Australians and Queenslanders. Inland rail is a long-term investment essential for the efficient and safer movement of increasing volumes of freight on the national network.

The Queensland government is a member of the inland rail implementation group. The early work of this group has identified and recommended priority sections for final assessment for preconstruction works and track upgrades. In Queensland, the Rosewood to Kagaru section on the existing interstate line immediately north of the existing state development area has been identified as one of these priorities.

In planning the Queensland section of the inland rail, we will be pursuing the establishment of a rail connection from the Darling Downs to Gladstone as a priority for Queensland's long-term future. The completion of a proposed rail line between the western and Moura rail systems, often referred to as the southern missing link, will one day link up the Surat Basin and allow for the export of significant volumes of coal through the Port of Gladstone. The Queensland government has already laid significant groundwork behind this strategy. The Surat Basin Infrastructure Corridor State Development Area—a 214-kilometre rail corridor between the towns of Wandoan and Banana which will accommodate the proposed inland rail—is already in place.

An exclusive mandate granted to the Surat Basin Rail Joint Venture to develop the rail connection on this corridor ended last year. My department has been approached by a number of parties who have expressed an interest in building the longer rail connection from Toowoomba to Gladstone, incorporating that existing corridor. The Queensland government will work with the Australian government as a matter of priority in establishing this missing rail connection that will be vital to the prosperity of the Queensland economy in the future. We welcome the rapid mobilisation by the Australian federal government of resources to deliver the inland rail project and look forward to working closely together to deliver this important piece of nation-building infrastructure.