




Speech By
Hon. Jeff Seeney

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Carmichael Coal Mine and Rail Project

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.42 am): Our government has identified the resources sector as one of the four key pillars of the state's economy, and we promised to grow the sector for the benefit of all Queenslanders now and into the future. The quarterly update on renewal released by the Premier last week shows that we have delivered on that commitment.

Our reforms to Labor's onerous approvals systems have transformed the business environment for the mining sector and, importantly, this has been achieved without any lowering of environmental standards. Projects that have languished in approvals for years are now being efficiently, yet rigorously, assessed—signalling that Queensland is open for business. We know that boosting economic growth creates jobs for Queenslanders and that growth is critical to tackling the legacy of debt left by Labor.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to advise the House of another important approval that has just been granted by Queensland's independent Coordinator-General. Late yesterday the Coordinator-General advised me that he has approved the proposed \$16 billion Carmichael Coal Mine and Rail Project north-west of Clermont. The Coordinator-General has approved the project subject to an extensive list of environmental and social conditions. If it proceeds, the Carmichael project would not only be the largest coalmine in Australia, but one of the largest in the world. It would also be a vital project in opening up the hugely significant Galilee Basin and providing the economic benefits and jobs that Queenslanders will need in the future.

The project has the potential to create up to 2,500 construction jobs and almost 4,000 operational jobs that would be significant to the future economic prosperity of that region and to the Queensland economy but, more importantly, to the generations of Queenslanders who will benefit from them. The approval also includes a 190-kilometre rail line, water supply infrastructure, coal handling and processing plant, and off-site infrastructure including a workers' accommodation village and an airport. The construction of the mine and rail components is expected to generate in excess of \$500 million annually in direct and indirect benefits to Queensland's economy. At full export capacity, the annual contribution to regional gross product and the state is expected to exceed \$900 million and \$3 billion respectively.

The Coordinator-General has worked closely with the Commonwealth Department of the Environment to ensure that matters of national environmental significance have been adequately addressed and all the necessary conditions have been set out in the approval. The Queensland Coordinator-General's report will now go to the Commonwealth minister for his decision on issues pertaining to the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act under the assessment

bilateral agreement that we have with the Commonwealth. The Coordinator-General has thoroughly assessed all of the matters of national environmental significance issues and recommended conditions to address every one of them. The proponent will also now need to obtain a water licence, a mining lease and an environmental authority before work can proceed.

The stringent and wide-ranging conditions set by the Coordinator-General include protections for the local flora and fauna; landholders interests; groundwater resources; the quality of surface water leaving the project site; air quality; and noise and dust levels. In relation to groundwater and water bores, the proponent will be required to reach make-good agreements with all affected landholders, including the identification and provision of alternative water supplies. They will also be required to contribute to water monitoring data and funding to a Galilee regional water resource model.

The state government's commitment to streamline projects like the Carmichael Coal Mine and Rail Project are focused on boosting employment opportunities while balancing environmental and social issues. This decision represents another major step forward to unlocking the resource potential of the Galilee Basin for the benefit of all Queenslanders in the future.