

**State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee**

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**From:** Jason Meikle <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 27 February 2020 1:01 PM  
**To:** State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee  
**Subject:** Re: Submission

Sent from my iPad

On 27 Feb 2020, at 9:36 am, Jason Meikle <[REDACTED]> wrote:

To whom it may concern

I am writing to you in relation to the Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 (the Bill), introduced in the Legislative Assembly on 4 February 2020 by the Honourable Dr Anthony Lynham, Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. In particular, about the amendments included in the Bill to the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999* (the Act) to clarify that only persons who are employees of a coal mine operator may be appointed as certain statutory office holders.

I will introduce myself – I'm Jason Meikle. I have approximately 22 years experience in open cut mines. I worked in the southern collieries at Ipswich at Ebenezer Mine from 2000 until the mine closed, then I headed north to the northern coalfields in the Bowen Basin. I worked across several different mines in the Bowen Basin and am now employed Goonyella Riverside as an Open Cut Examiner. I am elected as one of the mine's Site Safety and Health Representatives and have held this role for 14 years. I am currently appointed by the Governor in Council under the Act as a member of the Board of Examiners, which issues all statutory mining tickets for underground and open cut mines in Queensland. I also hold a current Qld Site Senior Executive ( SSE ) notice and also a WA Restricted Quarry Managers Ticket.

I had the opportunity to meet with Minister Lynham at the Queensland Safety and Health Conference for Mining last August, along with other elected Site Safety and Health Representatives from across Queensland mines. At the meeting, We presented issues to Minister Lynham that We believed needed changing in regard to statutory officials in Queensland coal mines to prevent further deaths. As one of the solutions, we put forward these particular changes included in the Bill. I believe that these changes would assist statutory officials to be able to do their job in accordance with the Queensland coal mining Act and associated regulations.

If you are not aware, the provisions proposed to be included in the Act regarding statutory officers were previously part of the now repealed Coal Mining Act 1925, however they were removed in 1999 after the legislation was reviewed following the Moura disaster.

I have personally witnessed Open Cut Examiners employed by labour hire companies not being able to do their job as they are in fear of reprisals.

Example 1 :

I have seen that an OCE employed by a labour hire company be told that he needs to be careful what he shuts down! This was in relation to a Dragline in an open cut. He responded that what was being done was not in accordance with the site Safe and Health Management System ( SHMS ) the response from the company representative was I don't care it is the most productive machine on site and no one stops it. The OCE said that an OCE had stopped it in previous shifts and nothing was said why is this different. The response was he is permanent! You are not!

Example 2 :

I have witnessed where OCEs will not shut down digger/ shovel and truck circuits for dust where you can not see the trucks running. I have challenged these OCEs and asked why they will not stop the circuits and have been told that they will not stop them as they will not be here next week. I have asked why and have been told that they have been told this by their supervisors and have witnessed this happening. As no reason has to be given to the labour hire employees when working for labour hire company's at the mines. They just get told that they no longer have a job! I shut the circuits down and get questioned for this so I can only imagine how a labour hire OCE would be treated.

Example 3 :

I and my other permanent OCEs get asked from our fellow Labour Hire OCEs to shut down or be witness to conversations that will not make the management happy in our role. We are asked as they believe that they will not keep their jobs when they shut down areas of the mine when exercising their powers and functions under the Qld CMHS Act and Regulations.

Also having witnessed two fatalities at my mine, I believe these changes are needed and that they will bring major change to the industry. I also believe amendments to the legislation would stop ticket holders putting their livelihood ahead of safety.

I wanted to make it known that these amendments were put forward to the Government by coal mine workers at the coal face and not from mining corporations.

I support the policy objective of the amendments as outlined in the Explanatory Notes to the Bill, that is, to ensure that statutory office holders under the Act can make safety complaints, raise safety issues, or give help to an official in relation to a safety issue without fear of reprisal or impact on their employment. I can also assure you that the proposed amendments are supported other Site Safety and Health Representatives, Open Cut Examiners and Deputies that I have spoken to since we suggested these amendments to Minister Lynham and the Bill was introduced.

I would love to meet to discuss these changes in person I am not able to be at the public meeting as I am on leave overseas. I am prepared to meet the committee in Brisbane after 23 March 2020 at my expense to explain the above.

Regards

Jason Meikle



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