



Speech by

MIKE REYNOLDS

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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MID WEST POWER SUPPLY NETWORK

Mr REYNOLDS (Townsville—ALP) (7.20 p.m.): I welcome NORQEB's plans to employ 30 extra staff to work on its \$38.5m upgrade of the mid west power supply network. This announcement makes a nonsense of the shadow Minister for Mines and Energy's statement that jobs will be lost from the electricity industry. Five staff have already been employed, and NORQEB hopes that the rest will be on the job by April. The staff would be based throughout NORQEB's area. Some will be working in those mid west towns, and others will go to the coast to replace people whose specialist skills will be needed in the west. NORQEB exemplifies the important nexus between the coast and the west. Local people will be employed wherever possible. However, some specialists will be recruited from outside the region.

The upgrading includes the construction of a 66,000-volt powerline to connect Cloncurry and Julia Creek and the refurbishment or replacement of SWER lines around Richmond, Julia Creek, Hughenden, Corfield and Winton. It also includes improvements to speed up fault detection and repair, a new \$66,000 line from Hughenden to Corfield and Winton, a new power station in Winton and new generators in Kajabbi and Dajarra.

This \$38.5m upgrade exemplifies the work that is being done by NORQEB. It shows that the nexus between Townsville and the coast and that important hinterland out to the west to the Northern Territory border and into the gulf area is a great priority of this Beattie Labor Government. I am very proud of the work that NORQEB has done over a long period. I commend it for the excellent work that it has done in the north and mid western areas.
