



Speech by

Hon. T. McGRADY

MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA

Hansard 24 August 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Mining Industry

Hon. T. McGRADY (Mount Isa—ALP) (Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister Assisting the Deputy Premier on Regional Development)(9.50 a.m.), by leave: The Beattie Government is committed to jobs, jobs and jobs. Therefore, I am pleased to be able to provide the House with information on a new initiative that allows the transfer of skills between the coalmining industry and other industries. This initiative cuts down on red tape and provides people from the coalmining industry with greater job prospects if they leave the industry for any reason.

I am pleased to inform the House that workers in the coal industry will now gain recognition of the skills that they have acquired through training delivered at mine sites. In the past, machinery operators who were trained and assessed on mine sites have not always had their experience and training recognised by the Division of Workplace Health and Safety when they apply for machinery operator certificates. This has meant that machinery operators on mine sites, some with years of experience on forklifts, cranes or front-end loaders, for example, are not automatically granted the necessary workplace health and safety certificates needed to obtain employment once they leave the mining industry. Most of these people have been completely reassessed in order to receive the necessary certificates to apply for new jobs. This is usually at their own expense and could involve lengthy waiting periods as well.

What this Government has done is to ensure that workers in the mining industry have their skills fully recognised. I pay tribute to the efforts of the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations in helping to achieve this goal. It came as a result of Government sitting down with industry stakeholders and closely examining the requirements for obtaining plant operators tickets for workplaces outside the mining industry. Those requirements and the levels obtained were then looked at against the training provided at mines. This led to an agreement that allowed the recognition of training and experience on mine sites for general industry applications. A heads of agreement document detailing this framework was signed recently and this will now remove the frustrations, costs and delays facing mine workers when they move from the mining industry to other sectors. So by cutting the red tape, we are providing much greater job opportunities for people who wish to continue utilising their skills in other areas. This is a clear sign of the Beattie Government's commitment to jobs, jobs, jobs.
