



Speech by

## KERRY SHINE

### MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

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Hansard 30 October 2001

#### RUSSELL MINING EQUIPMENT

**Mr SHINE** (Toowoomba North—ALP) (12.25 p.m.): It is with great pleasure that I rise to speak in this debate. I foreshadow that during this speech I will make an announcement of great importance to a Toowoomba industry. As we all know, the Premier's awards for excellence in exports are a much sought prize in the export community and businesses are highly competitive for them. This year a record 93 exporters were nominated in nine core categories of the awards. I am proud to say that a Toowoomba company took out the award for regional exporter of the year.

Russell Mineral Equipment is a specialist mining equipment designer which has its manufacturing plant based in Toowoomba. I am proud to say that it is in the electorate of Toowoomba North. I have been lobbying the Premier to make a visit to this business in Toowoomba, and I am pleased to announce that the Premier will visit this firm next Tuesday in a visit to Toowoomba for that purpose. I am particularly grateful for the Premier giving his time, bearing in mind that he was in Toowoomba only a week ago.

Since it was founded in 1987, Russell Mineral Equipment has taken the skills and ethics of high powered mechanical engineering design consultancy and cleverly combined them with the additional step of manufacturing those designs. Consequently, support and demand for its products and services are unsurpassed by any other mining manufacturing firm in Australia. The company has successfully developed a strong reputation around the world as a designer of equipment that delivers effective solutions to everyday processing problems. The ambition of its engineering team is to develop equipment used by mine operators to reduce mill down time in the process of replacing wear parts within the grinding mill areas of the concentrator.

The Australian mining market quickly adopted the solutions developed during the growth of the mining industry in the early 1990s and consumed 70 per cent of RME's production. Since 1996 the company has effectively developed a successful export market, to the point where 95 per cent of its products now travel overseas. RME equipment is used in most world mining markets including Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Ghana, Canada, USA, Chile, Argentina and Tanzania. Today, its mill relining machines, along with its recently developed recoilless jackhammer, have revolutionised the mining industry.

It is because of this that in 2000 Russell Mineral Equipment won the Queensland government's exporter of the year award for the small to medium manufacturer category. It was the first year that RME had entered the competition. This year it followed up that achievement by being named as Queensland's regional exporter of the year. Russell Mineral Equipment has demonstrated a major improvement to the mining market. As a consequence, it has strengthened and enhanced the capacity of mining in Australia and overseas, created significant job initiatives and encouraged communication and consultation with all clients to meet their diverse needs. It is a well deserved winner of the much sought after Premier's regional exporter of the year award.

The founder of the company is John Russell. He graduated from the Queensland Institute of Technology in 1979 and worked as a mechanical engineer for Mount Isa Mines for five years. In 1985 he saw problems with the mining equipment used by the mine operators and wanted to start his own business to try to solve those industry problems. It was not easy sailing for the first five years. He had to convince someone to buy his first machine. Success took off very quickly after that, and he formed the company Russell Mineral Equipment.

Mr Russell has been a strong supporter of the University of Southern Queensland and is a benefactor of the faculty of engineering at that university. Mr Russell has always been concerned that students will spend four years at university learning the theory and process of engineering and finish their degree without a good understanding of the financial, business and administrative aspects of running an engineering firm. Working with the University of Southern Queensland to change that has been his pattern over the past few years. He has also developed a graduate training program at Russell Mineral Equipment. I know that the whole of Toowoomba and Queensland will be behind Russell Engineering when it contests the Australian export awards in November.

Time expired.

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