



Speech by

Hon. ANNA BLIGH

MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Rail, Rolling Stock

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier) (9.40 am): I am very pleased today to announce that the Queensland government, through Queensland Rail, has approved a significant new investment of \$654 million for the purchase of rolling stock and infrastructure for Queensland's coal export system. This is one of the largest rolling stock orders ever made in Queensland's history. It comprises \$221 million for 25 electric locomotives, \$102 million for 15 diesel electric locomotives, \$271 million for 1,190 wagons and \$60 million for the construction of track related infrastructure. The state government has also approved in principle a second stage of rolling stock investment of \$216 million for an additional 920 wagons which could be necessary to meet demand in 2010-11.

As I said, this is one of the largest rolling stock orders ever made in QR's history and is in addition to the existing five-year \$1.4 billion program for the coal industry. Along with the existing program, and the \$113 million investment by QR in 510 new coal wagons that was announced in July by the then minister for transport, my colleague the Deputy Premier, this brings the total rolling stock investment to be made in forward years to \$2.05 billion—just over \$2 billion. This massive investment has the potential to directly sustain around 2,000 person years of employment in the Queensland rolling stock construction industry over the life of stage 1 of the project. It supports employment in the coalmining industry, which includes more than 23,000 people in Queensland. It also supports one of the key recommendations of the O'Donnell review into the performance of the Goonyella coal supply chain.

Stephen O'Donnell recommended that QR National immediately commence a process to acquire additional train sets to allow it to meet projected future volumes. Both stages of this new investment will allow QR to transport volumes of 261 million tonnes per annum by 2010-11. This represents by 2010-11—just four years away—a 59 per cent increase on volumes railed from this financial year. So in just four to five years we will see this investment deliver an increase in the amount of volume we can rail out to port of 59 per cent.

Coal exports are vital to the Queensland economy. It is vital to the future development of our regions and the employment of the people who move here. This massive infrastructure investment by our government will ensure the continued growth of our booming coal market. I promised when I became Premier of Queensland that I would do everything in my power to ensure that we stayed ahead of the game and stayed ahead of growth and today's announcement is a good example of that commitment in action.