



Speech by

# Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Hansard Tuesday, 27 October 2009

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Infrastructure Projects

**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.07 am): I wish to praise the good work of the Queensland Coordinator-General and the Department of Infrastructure and Planning for delivering world-class services to facilitate extensive projects for the benefit of all Queenslanders. In the last financial year alone, the Coordinator-General declared 13 projects worth an estimated \$65.2 billion and 27,215 jobs as significant. In 2007-08, 17 projects with an estimated worth of \$21.425 billion and 26,359 jobs were also declared. This financial year to date, there have been four significant project declarations worth \$8.39 billion and 9,400 jobs.

Yet the stringent evaluation process and the number of projects awaiting assessment were recently the subject of media comment. A recent media report stated that almost 40 projects were tied up in red tape. I would like to clarify the status of those projects. Of the 37 major projects listed as pending in the media reports, 17 are in the process of undertaking an environmental impact statement for which the proponent must supply the necessary information in its own time and 11 have had Coordinator-General reports completed. That means that the process is complete. Four have not applied for significant project declaration, two have been declared significant projects and are awaiting information from the applicants, two were withdrawn by the proponent before completing an environmental impact statement and one project was put on hold at the proponent's request.

Of the 17 projects with an EIS underway, just three are awaiting action by the Coordinator-General. A further 14 require action by the proponent. In addition, some of the projects reported by the media as pending have actually been approved. Others are even under construction. These include Rio Tinto's Clermont coalmine, the Boyne Island aluminium smelter, Xstrata's Rolleston coalmine, which is now operating, and the Darling Downs power station.

The time taken to complete stringent environmental assessments has also been subject to media scrutiny. Queenslanders do not want to return to the days of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s when projects were approved without proper environmental assessments. I am happy to say that the Coordinator-General's process streamlines major project assessment. It is a comprehensive assessment that delivers a streamlined set of conditions for project approvals. Significant projects always have various potential major impacts that need to be thoroughly assessed. These include everything from endangered species through to general environmental impacts such as noise, air or water quality. It takes time to ensure a good sound decision is made. Through the intensive work of the Coordinator-General, in both protecting and progressing the state, Queensland continues to see industrial and economic investment on a global scale.