



Speech by


Hon. Jeff Seeneey

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Hansard Wednesday, 12 September 2012

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coal Industry

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (2.09 pm): Yesterday I spoke in the House about the importance of the coal industry to Queensland and the support our government has for the coal industry. Today I want to inform the House just how the Newman government will work to ensure that the coal industry remains at the forefront of nationwide coal production.

Firstly, for the first time in Queensland the industry can now have total certainty about the amount it will pay in royalties. But from next month, when those royalties are increased, the industry can be sure of one thing: that under an LNP government those royalties will not be changed for a decade. Miners can have a decade of certainty—10 years of knowing what they will pay, a decade in which they can plan and move forward with investments in Queensland. The royalties freeze announced by the Treasurer yesterday will provide them with certainty, confidence and security to invest.

This government will do much more than that. The announcements that were made yesterday by the Treasurer were part of a package. It was a package that was about ensuring the people of Queensland got a fair share of the rewards from the resources that exist in Queensland but also that the industry can move forward as an essential part of the economy in the future. Royalties are only one part of the government imposed costs on miners. They are, in fact, a minimal cost, with some company annual reports indicating they make up less than 10 per cent of the cost structure that the industry carries. There is a host of regulation, red tape and green tape that has grown up over the years of Labor governments—layer upon layer of rules, regulations and requirements that miners have to meet to carry out their operations. A Labor government that fundamentally did not believe in the coal industry piled on these regulations for the last 14 years.

This government will examine every last detail of that regulation and will see that it is serving a necessary and a worthwhile purpose before we decide to retain it. As announced by the Treasurer yesterday, we will be establishing a resources cabinet committee—and it will meet for the first time on Friday—because we are serious about this task. That cabinet committee will aggressively, ruthlessly and forensically review the mass of regulations that are imposed on our coal industry. We recognise that there are numerous measures that impose considerable yet often unnecessary costs on the mining companies. We know these costs can be significant and these regulations act as a disincentive when expansion or investment decisions are made. We will work with the industry to remove such disincentives wherever possible. The committee's examination of these issues will provide a long overdue opportunity to address the regulations that miners believe hinder their efficiencies. This group of ministers will examine every regulation facing the coal industry and test them to ensure that the value they add is equal to the impost they put on the company. This is an opportunity for the industry to raise its concerns and to put its case as to why the changes should be made.

What the Treasurer announced yesterday was a package that will ensure that for the next 10 years the people of Queensland will receive fair value from our resources and the mining industry and the coal industry in particular can continue to play the important role that it does in the Queensland economy.