



Speech by


Hon. Jeff Seeneey

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Hansard Tuesday, 13 November 2012

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Abbot Point

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.47 am): The port of Abbot Point is an important strategic asset for the state. In May 2012 as a consequence of strong concerns expressed by the coal industry, our government said that it would no longer support the failed process put in place by the previous Labor government relating to prospective terminals four through nine at the port of Abbot Point including the concept of a multicargo facility. Instead, this government initiated a fundamental technical and commercial review of development options at the port of Abbot Point with a view to ensuring that any future development of coal-handling infrastructure was staged and closely aligned with emerging demand.

In undertaking this work, the government viewed the coal industry to be well placed to develop and fund incremental port expansions. A specialist facilitator—Dr Barry Golding of Promethean Planning Pty Ltd, assisted by Mr Noel Leach—was appointed in August 2012 to lead an intensive engagement process with stakeholders with a view to developing a commercial process suitable for delivering staged capacity expansions at Abbot Point. In their report back to the government, Dr Golding and Mr Leach recommended a logical commercial process which is now being further considered. A key component of this process is that capacity allocations should only be made after a detailed due diligence process is undertaken. This is so that any proposed development stages are awarded to and underpinned by parties identified as having credible projects which fall within the proposed development time frames. This allocation process would also seek to guarantee that capacity developers progress through a series of defined 'tollgates' covering concept, prefeasibility, feasibility and construction phases.

The process has similarities to that which has been successfully employed by the WICET Consortium for development of the Wiggins Island coal export terminal. The successful future expansion of Abbot Point will play a key role in Queensland's economic development, but it must also be done in a way that is consistent with environmental best practice.

I want to note today for the House the recent release of the Abbot Point voluntary cumulative impact assessment, which may be the first collaborative study of its kind undertaken in Australia. The CIA, as it has become known, was undertaken by the proponents of the new developments at Abbot Point. It was undertaken by BHP, GVK Hancock and Adani and it is made up of 16 comprehensive environmental impact studies. It was released recently by North Queensland Bulk Ports and it found that the proposed port expansion was unlikely to affect the integrity of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. This illustrates that we can have bulk export ports and that they can operate with no threat to the Great Barrier Reef. It should put an end to the scare campaigns that are continually run by extremist groups whose real agenda is to shut the coal ports and to shut down the coal industry.

This government understands the importance of the coal industry and we will support its expansion. At the same time we understand that any expansion must protect our environment. We will ensure that the industry expansion and environmental protection go hand in hand.