




Speech By
Hon. Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Gladstone Harbour

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (9.53 am): The federal government has released its long-awaited independent review into Gladstone Harbour. The report was authored by several highly credible scientists, including the chair of the Australian National Commission for UNESCO, and assessed the planning and approvals processes as well as the current conditions within Gladstone Harbour.

The key findings vindicate what the Newman government has been saying all along. It vindicates our approach in dealing with facts and not rhetoric, science and not scaremongering. I am pleased to inform the House that recommendations in the Commonwealth funded report not only support the great work that the Newman government has done in Gladstone to date, but equally are supportive of our moves to cut green tape and streamline approval processes. It comes as no surprise that the review found the environmental management and governance of the Port of Gladstone is comprehensive as it is one of the most studied ports in Australia, if not the world. After all, this is the only place in the world where an industrial harbour sits on the doorstep of a World Heritage reef. The harbour needs to be a functioning port to allow the local community to benefit from the heavy industry of Gladstone, the resource development in the broader region and the economic opportunities that these bring.

Queensland is a great state with great opportunities. We are open for business, but not at the expense of the environment. The report overwhelmingly supported the Newman government's Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership that we began establishing last year. It rightly recognised that the partnership and the associated independent science panel 'provides an excellent opportunity for addressing environmental issues and building stakeholder and public confidence in the future'. Finding No. 14 of the report stated—

Approval conditions that facilitate and enable cooperation and collaboration between proponents, and avoid duplication, are a useful mechanism for maximising environmental benefits, minimising regulatory burden and creating certainty for industry and the broader community.

That is why we are confident that under an Abbott-led coalition government we will establish a one-stop shop for major environmental approvals. Recommendation 8 states—

That the Queensland government not declare any more state development areas within or adjoining the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area without detailed consideration of impacts to world heritage values and robust consultation, including with the Australian government.

We are mindful of the impact of development on the Great Barrier Reef, which is exactly why we have scaled back the crazy expansion plans the former Labor government had approved at Abbot Point. It is time those opposite stopped talking down this state and got on board. It is time that they stopped playing politics and put the interests of Queenslanders first, rather than playing green games and inciting hysteria with unbacked scientific claims.

I table this report, which supports this government's approach to managing the environment while continuing to allow great opportunities for this great state.

Tabled paper: Independent Review of the Port of Gladstone, Report on Findings, July 2013 [\[3284\]](#).