




Speech By
Hon. Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Kestrel South Mine

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.10 pm): While the Deputy Premier talks about flying high amongst the clouds, yesterday I was getting down and dirty in a coalmine at Emerald. I had the chance to see firsthand industry investing, employing and growing in Queensland when I officially opened the Kestrel South Mine, 40 kilometres west of Emerald in the seat of Gregory. I cannot comment that the member for Gregory is not here, so I will not.

Mr Stevens: Yes, he is.

Mr NICHOLLS: Where is he? He is hiding.

Mr Johnson: Never far away.

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw, member for Gregory. I was actually going to say something nice—that his electorate is so ably represented by the member for Gregory and, given the level of development that I see there, he is obviously an outstanding representative, fighting hard for everything that his electorate gets—and I think he has got most of it for this year!

Kestrel South is the culmination of \$2 billion worth of investment by Rio Tinto and its partners Mitsui Kestrel Coal and Queensland Coal Pty Ltd. Development of the mine has taken six million hours of construction time. It is expected to produce an average of 5.7 million tonnes of high-quality coking coal each year—that is out of about seven million tonnes that will actually be mined and a portion of that, about 20 per cent, will be washed away—extending the life of the Kestrel mine by 20 years.

The equipment working the mine's longwall cuts up to 5,000 tonnes per hour. It was originally, when delivered, painted pink in a joint venture with the McGrath Foundation to acknowledge the work necessary to ensure that we seek to find a cure for breast cancer. At full production the mine will employ more than 400 people. The coal from Kestrel will be exported through the Port of Gladstone to customers in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Europe, India and China. As I said at the opening yesterday, the best coking coal in the world comes from Queensland and some of it will come out of this mine.

This development and others coming on stream mean jobs for Queenslanders both in the mining sector and in a host of associated industries and in towns servicing mining communities. Despite the doomsayers, including a former Prime Minister of this country, telling us that the boom is over and coal is on the way out, the evidence is that the coal industry in Queensland is looking to the future. Record tonnages are being put through our ports and new mines like Kestrel South are being developed. Only a month ago the Premier opened the Daunia Mine, Caval Ridge is due to come online next year, and exploration and development continues in the Galilee Basin.

The coal industry is one of the linchpins of the Queensland economy, and this government is determined to do all we can to ensure the resources sector can operate effectively and efficiently in our great state. By reducing red and green tape, streamlining approvals and developing informed policy through the resources committee of cabinet, we are letting the sector get on with business.

Our approach is being welcomed by industry. Let me quote Rio Tinto Energy's Chief Executive, Harry Kenyon-Slaney, yesterday when he was asked by the media about working with the Newman government. This is what he said—

There has been a willingness to listen, there is a willingness to think about opportunities for improvement. There is a willingness to make sure that processes and systems are efficient.

It might not make the headline news when the government gets this sort of endorsement from industry, but it says that the people who are investing and creating jobs in this state are getting what they need from this government. By supporting the four pillars of our economy we are ensuring Queensland remains a great state full of great opportunity, a place to employ, invest and grow.