




Speech By  
**Scott Stewart**

**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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**MOTION: NATURAL RESOURCES AND MINES**

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (6.12 pm): As mentioned by my colleague Dr Anthony Lynham, Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, I reiterate that this government absolutely recognises the importance of North-West Queensland for the future economic development of this state, especially for its role as a major producer of valuable commodities, including silver, lead, zinc, copper, gold and phosphate. In the 2013-14 financial year, mineral production in Queensland was valued at \$8.3 billion, of which more than 70 per cent was sourced in minerals from the North West Mineral Province. When that is put into a global context, Queensland's mining production in 2013-14 was second in the world for lead, third in the world for zinc, fifth in the world for silver and 13th in the world for copper. In 2013-14 in Australia Queensland was responsible for 66 per cent of lead and zinc production, 77 per cent of silver production and 28 per cent of copper production. Based on known discoveries, the North West Minerals Province is the richest zinc province in the world, if not one of the largest, and also contains a number of world-class copper deposits. These significant deposits include the current mines of Mount Isa, Cannington and Ernest Henry, with the Dugald River zinc deposits being assessed for development also considered to be amongst the best of its type.

Naturally the Queensland government is keen to support the development of these industries, to maintain the momentum of this terrific heritage in the story of our state to underpin the economic lifeblood of this region. Another potential opportunity for the province is the proposed gas line from Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory to Mount Isa. This government is very supportive of this project and is hopeful a decision on the route will be decided soon and in our favour. This is a significant project because it has the potential to substantially expand the network and to tap into a previously under-utilised gas resource in this area. It would also provide a reliable and cost-effective service delivery option for the industry currently operating in Mount Isa, as well as encouraging businesses to consider basing their operations in Mount Isa.

Still in the north-west, this government has also honoured an election commitment to keep the Mount Isa copper smelter open until 2020, which will support over 1,000 jobs in Mount Isa and Townsville. Glencore's Mount Isa mine continues to be an important operation to the people of Queensland through the economic, employment and social benefits it provides. Further north in the Aurukun region, late last year Glencore negotiated a development agreement for the Aurukun bauxite reserve. This is an important project with the potential for very significant direct and indirect benefits for the Aurukun and Cape communities as well as royalty contributions to the state over the life of the mine. Glencore intends to assess the feasibility of a bauxite mine producing six million tonnes per year over the 20-year mine life as its first stage. Glencore has now applied for a mineral development licence over this resource which will enable them to undertake feasibility studies and impact assessments for the resource. All in all there are very positive signs in the industry and opportunities.

In my own electorate, a new berth facility at the Port of Townsville—a joint venture between Glencore and Incitec Pivot and the port—has been commissioned. This \$8 million Berth 8 facility will increase ship loading capacity at the port and will secure long-term export opportunities for the resource producing areas in North Queensland.

In my life before politics as a teacher and as a school principal in these resource producing areas, it was my passion to assist in skilling young people for work. Many of my students have moved into jobs in the mineral sector and I am looking forward to working now to ensure that the growth of employment opportunities in this sector continues. In the future I hope to see Townsville grow and develop as a gateway to the mineral-rich areas in North Queensland.