




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Electricity, Renewable Energy

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (10.07 am): Two weeks ago an extreme one-in-50-year weather event resulted in South Australia losing power. Before the storm had even passed, some politicians sought to opportunistically use this disaster to push a political agenda when they should have been focused on helping people on the ground impacted by the event.

Without waiting for the facts around what happened—in fact, within hours of it happening—politicians, including later in the day the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister and some of those opposite subsequently, turned South Australia's disaster into an unjustified attack on Queensland's renewable energy target. They pushed the panic button to generate an energy crisis across Australia when there was not one.

I assure the House and the people of Queensland that, as the Palaszczuk guides Queensland's increased use of renewables as a clean, modern source of energy generation, we will maintain a secure and reliable electricity supply. The 2016 electricity statement of opportunities published by the Australian Energy Market Operator shows that Queensland continues to have a secure and reliable electricity supply up to the model period of 2025-26. There is no forecast lack of reserve capacity for Queensland under any scenario modelled by AEMO.

Queensland is different from South Australia. We have a substantially different and more diverse energy generation fleet. The state's diverse mix of electricity generation includes coal generation capacity of about 8,000 megawatts, gas generation of about 2,700 megawatts, hydro generation of about 500 megawatts and bagasse generation of about 700 megawatts. Even as the share of renewables grows, we will continue strong supplies of traditional baseload generation capacity, of which 65 per cent is owned by the people of Queensland.

No power system will be unaffected if a weather event is severe enough, as Queenslanders in Yeppoon and Rockhampton know all too well from the category 5 Cyclone Marcia last year and, of course, North Queenslanders with Cyclone Yasi. The Palaszczuk government is committed to maintaining system security and reliability as we plan to transition towards 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030. We know that achieving this target will be challenging and requires careful planning. That is why earlier this year the Palaszczuk government engaged an independent Renewable Energy Expert Panel, chaired by former Macquarie Capital executive Colin Mugglestone, tasked with ensuring that our transition is sustainable and cost-effective and also creates jobs.

The expert panel has engaged closely with the Energy Market Operator to ensure that system security and reliability are at the forefront of our planning. That draft report providing credible pathways to meet a 50 per cent target by 2030 will be released soon. I outlined this last week at the COAG Energy Council's meeting, where it was agreed that Chief Scientist, Dr Alan Finkel, will conduct an independent review of system security and reliability in the national electricity market for the advice of the COAG Energy Council early next year. The Finkel review provides the opportunity for the necessary move towards a more integrated approach to energy and carbon policy. While some of the usual suspects have used the opportunity to undermine renewables, perhaps the one good thing to come out of the South Australia's recent extreme storm is a strengthened resolve amongst all ministers to manage an effective transition to a sustainable and clean energy future that safeguards a reliable and affordable electricity supply.