




Speech By
Hon. Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Resources Industry

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (10.12 am): Firstly, it is an honour and a privilege to be standing here delivering my first ministerial statement as the resources minister. The resources sector is in Queensland's economic DNA and has also played an important role in my own family going back generations. In 1924 my great-grandfather Walter John Davidson was one of the original Mount Isa miners and there is a mine shaft named in his honour.

I have hit the ground running. Already I have had the opportunity to be on site to see the industry on the ground, from Mount Isa to Nebo. I look forward to many more visits to mine sites across our state. I saw that the resources sector is and will be playing a leading role in our economic recovery.

During the pandemic the Queensland government and the resources sector have stood up to protect 60,000 jobs and our \$54 billion worth of exports. This included: waiving rent for explorers until 31 March next year and capping other fees and charges until July 2021; fast-tracking 7,000 square kilometres of land for gas and coal exploration; and bringing forward economic recovery by boosting \$2.8 million to our Collaborative Exploration Initiative grants, with an additional \$10 million over four years to keep the momentum going. We have welcomed Arrow Energy's commitment to its \$10 billion Surat Gas Project. That 800 construction and 200 permanent jobs generator is Queensland's largest gas project to start since 2011.

Looking ahead, as part of the Unite and Recover economic recovery strategy, we are delivering the Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan to help regional economies to not only recover from the pandemic's effects but also capitalise. We will also outline how we are going to develop Queensland's new economy through the minerals sector as a growth opportunity from Mount Isa to Townsville and potentially across the state.

Right now we are working with the resources sector on a \$5 million concept study into a Bowen Basin gas pipeline; financially backing Mount Isa Mines' ongoing copper processing operations, including bringing additional security for around 1,000 workers from Mount Isa to Townsville—I have to tell the House that they were very happy with that announcement; and working on the \$1 billion Olive Downs coalmine, which will employ around 700 workers during construction and up to 1,600 people during operation. We have also progressed the remaining mining leases for QCoal's 500-worker Byerwen Mine and we are providing the regulatory approvals for the \$10 billion Surat Gas Project, which will support 1,000 workers.

Our track record speaks for itself. Over the past five years we have supported \$21 billion worth of investment in resources projects, creating more than 8,000 jobs. We will continue to work with the sector to help the economy rebound stronger from the COVID-19 pandemic, turning this crisis into opportunity.