




Speech By
Lance McCallum

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Coronavirus, Economic Recovery

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (2.30 pm): Queensland truly is the place to be. Our economy continues to bounce back strongly, restrictions are easing, and slowly but surely our communities across the state are getting to our new normal. We are keeping Queenslanders safe, and we are keeping Queenslanders in jobs. The latest ABS figures reveal that we are the only Australian state to have more jobs now than in March last year prior to the pandemic, with Queensland adding 19,100 more jobs. That is compared to 13,700 less in Victoria and a huge drop of 48,300 in New South Wales. A big part of this jobs growth is our ongoing renewables boom, with the Sunshine State under the Palaszczuk Labor government fast on its way to becoming a renewables superpower. We are committed to cleaner, cheaper electricity right across the state.

Since 2015 we have backed \$8.5 billion in investment in 44 large-scale renewable projects that have supported 7,000 jobs in construction alone. We are driving forward and creating more highly skilled jobs, and many of those are in regional Queensland. We have committed \$145 million for three renewable energy zones across Northern, Central and Southern Queensland. These zones have already attracted interest from more than 190 proposals that represent a potential investment of more than \$93.5 billion and 60 gigawatts of renewables. In addition, our \$500 million Queensland Renewable Energy Fund will allow our proudly publicly owned generators to increase Queensland's ownership of renewable energy assets and infrastructure. It complements our renewable energy zones and supports significant renewable investment and progress in our 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030.

Our renewables boom is joined by our rapidly developing hydrogen industry. We have already exported green hydrogen, made from Queensland sunshine, overseas, thanks to our support of the QUT Redlands Research Facility. In an Australian first, Hydrogen Park Gladstone will blend renewable hydrogen into an entire city's gas network for residential, commercial and industrial customers. We are also supporting green hydrogen export projects in Townsville, hydrogen powered cars, electricity generation and 100 percent renewable smelters. These are just some of the projects supported by our \$25 million Hydrogen Industry Development Fund. It is particularly fitting to mention our commitment to becoming a world leader in both hydrogen and renewables today, given it is the first day of the World Hydrogen Summit. At this virtual global summit of hydrogen leaders, the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen will showcase Queensland on the world stage, sharing our success today alongside our plans for tomorrow, demonstrating to the world that Queensland is the place to be when it comes to jobs and investment.

That very much includes our local community in Ipswich and Bundamba. Recently I proudly welcomed cabinet to the Rheinmetall Defence Australia facility at Redbank, confirming our commitment to bring the \$27 billion Land 400 phase 3 contract to Queensland, a project that will create around 500 jobs in addition to the 450 highly skilled positions already being brought to Queensland as part of the

phase 2 win. Rheinmetall will soon be joined by a state-of-the-art \$1 billion Coles distribution warehouse. This continues the massive industry investment in Redbank, which is already home to the biggest Australia Post mail facility in the country.

We are also welcoming the safe return of community sports and cultural events. Yesterday I was proud to attend the Zonta Club of Ipswich which hosted hundreds of people at its International Women's Day breakfast. Last weekend we hosted the very first Ipswich Indigenous All Stars versus Ipswich All-Stars Rugby League game, showcasing local league legends, Ipswich Jets icons and plenty of top-grade experience. Members of our historic Ipswich Little Theatre have returned to the boards for the first time in 12 months, and in May *The Gathering* will be held at our brand new Ipswich Events and Entertainment Centre. This celebration of Celtic music, culture and performance is expected to attract about 5,000 people with the support of our Celebrating Multicultural Queensland Program. Queensland really is the place to be as our strong and safe recovery continues.