




Speech By
Hon. Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Resources Industries

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (10.12 am): Data is king. It is no different in the resources industry. It informs so much about what companies and explorers do, how they make new discoveries and what value they put on their finds. Businesses make decisions that create jobs based on data and information. On that note, I am pleased to advise the House that decades of Queensland's exploration data is now available to all explorers—and it is free! This will only lead to even greater growth and more jobs in the resources industry in the future.

Right now the resources sector continues to support more than 71,000 jobs across our state. It represents \$48 billion in exports and generates millions of dollars in royalties for all Queenslanders. This new data release from GeoScience Queensland will help to continue to grow and underpin the resources industry, a key pillar of our economy now and into the future—and it is free!

Almost 20,000 new industry exploration reports spanning the last 50 years will now be made available to the resources industry. This means greater transparency and helps bring to light information relating to the exploration of coal and minerals across Queensland. Combined with 60,000 existing reports, this new data will help give resources and exploration companies more certainty for investment decisions now and into the future—and it is free!

For years these reports have been kept in confidence, but following regulatory changes made in 2020, coal and mineral exploration reports will now be made available after five years as opposed to being held for the life of tenure. This is about growing jobs into the future as people look to new-age minerals which we have in abundance in the North West Minerals Province. The release of this free information will encourage explorers from across the country and the world to look at Queensland and its huge potential. Queensland is such a vast state, which only reinforces how essential information is to growing the industry and creating jobs into the future. The release of this data is about making critical information more accessible and mapping out a roadmap for exploration for decades to come—and it is free!

In Queensland the latest statistics from the ABS show Queensland's exploration sector continues to grow, with more than \$677 million invested in 2020, up more than \$117 million on the previous year. I am confident that allowing businesses access to this information will continue that growth which will help with our economic recovery from the COVID-19 global pandemic. Queensland continues to lead the way for the rest of the nation when it comes to making data freely available for exploration and this is just another example of how the Palaszczuk government is backing our resources sector with freely available data.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. So, it is free?