




Speech By
Patrick Weir

MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Callide Power Station

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (2.25 pm): The events we saw unfold last week at the Callide Power Station were significant and unprecedented, with serious and wide-reaching effects. It is an extraordinary event when all four generators at the one station fail simultaneously. One generator failing is bad, two is alarming and three is disastrous, but all four failing at once deserves a full and independent investigation. What was equally disturbing was the Premier's response. She dismissed this unparalleled situation, with all four generators down, as a basic maintenance issue. The Premier did not see any urgency in getting a briefing—she was more interested in long-lunching with Labor mates at the Labor conference over the weekend—waiting for two full days to act. If that is the standard the Premier accepts then that is an exceptionally low standard. This alone proves what the Labor backbench is saying—that is, the Premier has checked out.

I am on the record as having raised concerns about a lack of maintenance in coal-fired power stations for some time now. At every stage the government has dismissed those claims. However, this week the Mining and Energy Union publicly confirmed exactly what I have been claiming, quoting that the state owned power stations are 'being dangerously run into the ground'. The MEU goes on to cite safety concerns that are 'dangerous for our members who work at the stations', referencing the close calls workers have had.

If generators fail it will impact supply and prices, especially if there are heatwaves during the summer. On Monday the minister said there was 9,560 megawatts of electricity capacity available at that particular time. This falls short of Queensland's peak demand from last year, when demand rose to 10,102 megawatts. We know that there were nine days last summer where demand exceeded 9,000 megawatts—and we had a mild summer. Experts recommend a buffer of 1,000 megawatts at all times. This is cause for concern, and the minister all but admitted this himself in his comments on Monday.

Even the Mining and Energy Union is on the record as being concerned about blackouts. They said they are worried about our energy security. In the middle of a cost-of-living crisis, Queenslanders need to know that their government is doing everything it can to ease the pressure on households. A full independent investigation must be held to give Queenslanders the answers and confidence they need that their lights will stay on and that bills will not skyrocket. We know this government's track record when it comes to integrity issues and cover-ups so we cannot have Caesar judging Caesar. That is why the independence of the inquiry the LNP is calling for is vital. We always know an issue has gone from bad to worse if the Labor aligned union is engaging in open warfare with the government.