




Speech By
Hon. Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Resources Industry, Women

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (2.33 pm): I rise to talk about the amazing women we have in our resources sector and the importance of having a diverse workforce.

Ms Pugh: Hear, hear!

Mr STEWART: Thank you. I take that interjection. Earlier this month I had the pleasure of attending the Queensland Resources Council's and Women in Mining and Resources Queensland annual International Women's Day breakfast and Resources Awards for Women.

I would like to congratulate all the finalists and all the winners from the day, including Jill Coppo, who won the Exceptional Young Woman in Queensland Resources. Ms Coppo is from my home town of Townsville. She is the Engineering and Projects Superintendent at South32 Cannington Mine—a silver, lead and zinc mine located about 200 kilometres south-east of Mount Isa. I had the great pleasure of meeting Ms Coppo at the event to congratulate her. She was beaming. She was absolutely full of beans. She is in charge of a team of about 30 people and is clearly a role model for any woman looking to join the resources workforce.

Having women like Ms Coppo and Lydia Gentle, who was named the Exceptional Woman in Queensland Resources, at the award ceremony is incredibly important for women of all ages from right across the state looking at joining the industry. We say this all the time in this House—and I heard the Premier say it today: you cannot be what you cannot see. Thankfully we are seeing more and more women joining the industry. For our young women who are in our classrooms today and the young women who were in the gallery today, there is a real career path for them in the resources industry.

Last year we saw an average of nearly 14,000 women employed in the Queensland resources sector, accounting for almost 18 per cent of the total workforce. This is up more than 46 per cent from the same period five years ago and nearly 80 per cent from 10 years ago. Quite clearly, the industry is much better for it. Having diversity in perspective and experience in any industry can only be a good thing for the workforce.

It is great to be speaking about this today on the same day that the Palaszczuk government released the Queensland Women's Strategy 2022-27. As the Minister for Resources, I can say that the Palaszczuk government is committed to seeing more and more diversity in the resources sector and we want to assist companies in achieving this. Through the Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan, an industry workforce plan will be developed which will examine ways to make the workforce more diverse and inclusive by attracting and retaining women, former defence personnel, First Nations people and people with a disability. The resources sector has never been more diverse and there are so many unheralded people like Ms Coppo who are doing amazing things already.

(Time expired)