



Speech By  
**Bryson Head**


**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

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Record of Proceedings, 26 October 2023

**TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Report, Motion to Take Note**

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (3.46 pm): I second some of the comments made today by members across the chamber, because we all fundamentally agree when it comes to the safety of workers in Queensland, regardless of what industry they come from but, in this instance, specifically the coalmining industry. I am a former coalmine worker. I worked at a number of coalmines across Queensland and across the country. It was an absolute tragedy when Gavin Feltwell was killed at Moranbah North. I was a worker at that coalmine not that long ago. His death was a deep shock to everyone who worked there and that shock is still felt by the Moranbah community. I am sure that his family are still grieving.

I thank the committee for its efforts in compiling this report. This was a genuinely bipartisan effort to work towards improving coalmine safety in this state. It is clear that there is a long way to go, because there have been far too many incidents across Queensland in recent times. Of course, this inquiry came about after the explosion at Grosvenor coalmine, where I had been an employee. I was part of the exploration crew doing some gas testing and working on the model for that mine to operate again in a safe way. It was great to be able to visit Grosvenor Mine and go underground. As an exploration geologist I spent a lot of time on the surface looking at core samples, but it was fantastic to see that coal underground in situ.

Coal is a key pillar of Queensland's economy and it is a key pillar of Callide as well. There are a lot of communities in Callide that would not be anything like they are without the coalmining industry. I pay credit to all of those coalmine workers who go to work every day and face the risks the coalmine industry brings in order to support their families, their communities and the Queensland economy. They do not get enough thanks from people across Queensland. They are demonised by parts of society, but they are providing great revenue and prosperity to our state.

I second members' comments that every worker deserves to come home to their families at the end of every shift. That is something that is fundamental to us all. I note that non-government members of the committee outlined in the statement of reservation some of the ways the government could step up and be more active in this.

The minister has spoken about the recommendations the board of inquiry is implementing, and he said all 30 have either been implemented or they are working on them. I do note that in the RSHQ 2022-23 annual report they said that as of 30 June they have only formally implemented 10 of these and there are 20 remaining. They do note that progress is underway, but these board of inquiry recommendations were handed down some time ago. We all know how important mine safety is, and all I would ask of the minister is to get moving. We are nearly at the end of the year. There are only two sitting weeks left in this year. If more legislation to fix some of these problems is not tabled this year, then we are not going to have much time to deal with it next year. Mine safety is not something that should be put on the backburner because you have other priorities. One of the LNP's priorities is to make our community safer, and safety regulation in the mining industry forms part of that broader picture.

I would like to touch on a couple of things from our statement of reservation. In achieving zero harm in the industry we must be able to find a way forward that also allows the coalmining industry to continue. We could achieve zero harm by shutting it down, but then we would be shutting down a huge part of our economy and drying up a huge amount of our tax revenue and jobs across the state. That is something we have to avoid, but let's all work together. Let's achieve zero harm in the industry. We must do better, and I urge the minister to table some of that legislation before the end of this sitting year.