



Speech By
Stephen Andrew

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

Record of Proceedings, 16 November 2023

TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 26 October (see p. 3344), on motion of Mr King—

That the House take note of the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 29, 57th Parliament, *Inquiry into coal mining industry safety*, tabled on 16 February 2023.



Mr ANDREW (Mirani—PHON) (3.04 pm), continuing: Under the Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003, the relevant clause states—

The ATSB must, as soon as practicable after an investigation has been completed, publish, by electronic or other means, a report in relation to the investigation.

The Coal Mining Safety and Health Act, however, states—

The Minister, CEO or chief inspector may make or issue a public statement identifying, and giving information about ...

- (a) the commission of offences against this Act and the persons who commit the offences;
- (b) investigations conducted under this Act about accidents or high potential incidents at a coal mine

There is just a small difference in wording with 'may' instead of 'must', yet the difference it has made to these two sectors could not be more telling.

Another interesting comparison involves accident response times. Coalmining operators have an obligation to report serious accidents as soon as possible after an event takes place. During 2014-15, the average time for reporting an accident to the inspectorate was 6.3 hours. For the last reporting year, this had increased to 7.8 hours. Reports of serious accidents should be made within three hours and the delay in reporting these incidents is a matter of considerable concern. The extent to which coalmine operators have implemented the BOI recommendations tells us little about the current state of safety and health within the industry. Only legislating for full transparency of its accident investigations and reports will do that. Just one word in the act needs to change. That is all it will take.