




Speech By
Hon. Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

Record of Proceedings, 11 June 2025

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Resources Industries

 **Hon. DR LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development) (2.21 pm): The Crisafulli government is stepping on the gas, quite literally, to drive new investment in Queensland's gas sector and put downward pressure on energy prices. At the recent Australian Energy Producers Conference I announced that nine parcels of land comprising over 16,000 square kilometres will be open for tender across the Cooper-Eromanga and Bowen-Surat basins. To give a sense of scale, that is 6½ times the size of the ACT. These areas include opportunities for both conventional and unconventional gas development. Importantly, none of the areas intersects with the Lake Eyre Basin strategic environmental area designated precinct.

We are sending a strong message to resource investors that Queensland is open for business. They need to hear it loud and clear because the past decade of anti-gas policies from those opposite has sent investment interest in Queensland off a cliff. They cheered on policies that locked up resources, leaving Queenslanders paying higher bills and sending jobs and investment to other jurisdictions. The Crisafulli government is taking a commonsense approach because the best way to bring down energy prices is to bring more energy onto the market. We can do that in Queensland while upholding our strong regulatory frameworks that protect the environment and rights of landholders.

We are not stopping there because Queensland is the engine room for the east coast gas market. Unscientific decisions made by other jurisdictions have forced Queensland to carry the load for the southern states or, as the *Australian* put it in a headline the other week—and I paraphrase—we are the last bastion to keep the lights on. We need a regulatory system that supports new development and more investment. That is why I have also launched a three-month targeted review into Queensland's gas and resources land-release process. We know that time is money, so we are delivering a framework that is faster, more transparent and investment ready. This review will aim to modernise and streamline the way exploration areas are identified and released and examine the expression-of-interest and competitive-tender processes.

The gas industry is tipping money into the bucket. Last financial year we returned \$1.7 billion in royalties to Queenslanders. It supports local businesses and underpins jobs across our regions. I saw this firsthand last week touring Origin's operations near Roma and Santos's Ballera gas operations in the remote south-west of Queensland—only 80 or so kilometres from the South Australian border. The gas plant and surrounding infrastructure provide jobs for 40 hardworking Queenslanders at any one time. Last year alone it processed 58 petajoules of gas, and about 27 per cent of that went to the domestic market.

I also saw some of the operating gas wells in the Cooper Basin and how the industry is protecting the region's pristine environment, particularly after the recent floods. Out there the gas wells are kilometres apart and a lot of them are on stilts. They are on stilts for a reason: in times of flood, excess water can flow around the gas infrastructure to ensure minimal disruption to natural flows. It is a great story and is one that I am happy to tell.

On this side of the chamber we are supporting the hardworking Queenslanders who work in our mining and resources industries. We will continue to deliver for Queenslanders by unlocking supply and driving new gas investment to create more jobs, deliver billions in royalty dividends and put downward pressure on gas prices.