



Speech By
Hon. Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Trade Mission, South Korea and Japan

 **Hon. DR LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development) (2.39 pm): Big things are happening for Queensland. Queensland is a state full of opportunities and the Crisafulli government is pulling out all stops to deliver a better lifestyle through a stronger economy. After a decade of decline under the former Labor government, whose anti-mining policies sent investment off a cliff, we are sending a clear message that Queensland is open for business. We are travelling far and wide to find the right people to invest, because if companies want to invest in Queensland we will make it happen. That is why last week I led a targeted trade mission to strengthen Queensland's economic ties with two of our most important trading partners: South Korea and Japan.

My first port of call was to meet with Hyundai Rotem's CEO and president, Mr Lee Yong-bae, and visit HRC's factory in Changwon, where test trains are being manufactured for the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program. Make no mistake, the Crisafulli government has got the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program back on track. During my visit I walked through the test train carriages, I sat in the seats and, more importantly, I received an ironclad guarantee from HRC that both test trains will be in Australia by the end of the year. I know that the member for Maryborough is very excited about that.

Unlike those opposite, who oversaw cost and time blowouts, the Crisafulli government is delivering on time and on budget, with 200 blue-collar jobs up for grabs at Torbanlea to build our trains right here in Queensland. As we know, under those opposite Queensland plunged to a dismal 39th place on the Fraser Institute's Annual Survey of Mining Companies Investment Attractiveness Index. In just over a year we have recovered to 13th place globally. We are working hard with companies that share our vision for Queensland to deliver a better lifestyle through a stronger economy, and the broader mining sector is responding, ranking Queensland higher than the average score for the United States, Argentina and Canada.

There is interest in our resources sector right across South-East Asia—from our high-quality metallurgical coal to our booming gas sector and emerging critical minerals industry. During my trade mission in South Korea I met with senior representatives from Posco International, Rio Tinto, Choil Aluminium and Korea Zinc. In Japan I spoke at the JOGMEC summit and had constructive conversations with Marubeni, Mitsui, Idemitsu and Itochu—longstanding partners who have made great contributions to Queensland's resources sector. Itochu recently invested in our high-quality coal assets through the Argo consortium, taking over the former Fitzroy Australia Resources assets and Bowen Coking Coal. Make no mistake, interest in our coal sector remains strong. These discussions reinforced the depth of our trade relationships and the vital role our resources and manufacturing sectors play in Queensland's economy.

It was an opportunity to reinforce the value the Crisafulli government places on partnerships with the South Korean and Japanese investors and provide reassurance that under our government they can expect reliability, stability and trust—something that was severely lacking from those opposite. On this side of the House we know that certainty matters, and we are fighting tooth and nail to get our reputation back. That is exactly the message I took to Japan and South Korea on this mission. Queensland is open for business and we will not wait for opportunity to knock; we will go out and seize it.