



Speech By  
**Hon. Dale Last**

**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

---

Record of Proceedings, 5 March 2026

## **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) (9.41 am): Mr Speaker, I do not know about you but I am not all that keen on paying \$3 a litre when I fill up my car. That is one of the reasons why today I am opening competitive tenders for 18 new resource exploration areas right across our great state. These include 12 petroleum and gas areas totalling more than 7,000 square kilometres in the Bowen-Surat and Cooper-Eromanga basins. Four of the petroleum and gas areas will be released subject to an Australian market supply condition, ensuring any gas produced from those tenures is supplied to the domestic market.

The Crisafulli government is delivering certainty for the resources sector and a plan for Queensland's energy future by unlocking more areas for exploration. This is how we drive energy prices down for Queenslanders—by unlocking more of these areas and mandating their use for domestic consumers. It is the second time the Crisafulli government has released land in the gas- and oil-rich Cooper Basin after Labor effectively locked up the area during their decade of decline. It follows our announcement last month about securing investment in the Taroom Trough near Miles that could pave the way for Australia's first major new oil province since the 1970s—as mentioned by the Premier—with serious potential to revive a domestic oil production industry.

We are also releasing four coal areas in the Bowen-Surat basins. That is right: we are backing our coal sector and driving further investment because we know that our key trading partners in places like South Korea and Japan want more of our Queensland coal. You may have heard about the so-called 'big Australia' not being interested in Queensland. Well, we are interested in creating a great Australia. Make no mistake, we will throw our support behind those companies that want to invest here in Queensland.

Today I am also releasing two areas north-east of Julia Creek, an area which contains one of the largest known vanadium resources in the world. These areas are particularly exciting because Queensland is on the cusp of a critical minerals boom. We have the resources below the ground and we are giving companies the confidence to do business here.

Exploration is where every major project begins, and without it there is no pipeline of future supply. Today's tender process is part of a broader plan to ensure Queensland continues building its pipeline of petroleum, gas, coal and mineral projects, delivering long-term energy security and economic growth. We have recently appointed preferred tenderers to explore for petroleum and gas in the Cooper-Eromanga basins and the Taroom Trough, with the potential to bring more than \$100 million of new exploration activity into the state and, importantly, into regional Queensland.

Queensland is open for business, and the resource industry is responding to that call. Under our government we are restoring confidence, and investor sentiment has shot up the charts—from a dismal 37 world ranking under those opposite to 13 in just 12 months. We are positioning ourselves at the forefront of resource investment in this country. We do that by giving industry certainty around exploration, certainty around regulation and certainty about the approvals process. The current turmoil in the Middle East underscores the importance of driving domestic investment to develop our energy commodities and natural resources. The industry now has a government working in lock step with them to unlock supply, drive down energy prices and create thousands of jobs for Queenslanders, and today's tender process is just the beginning.