

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 394

asked on Thursday, 13 March 2008

MR PEARCE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND ENERGY (MR WILSON)—

QUESTION:

- (1) How many new mines have opened in Queensland over the last three years?
- (2) How do the people of Queensland benefit from this multi-billion dollar industry?

ANSWER:

- 1) Since the beginning of 2005, there have been 11 major new coal mines and 10 major new mineral mines that have commenced production in Queensland. This figure does not include numerous expansions of existing mines or the development of additional satellite deposits that are treated at an existing mine's operations, and is also restricted to larger, multi-million dollar new operations.

In addition to these larger mines, approximately 130 small-scale new mines for gemstones, alluvial gold and non-metallic minerals such as dimension stone, clays and industrial minerals also commenced operations in this period. Due to the intermittent operation of many of these smaller mines, multiple commodities involved and various name and ownership changes, a more precise figure is not available.

- 2) The income the State receives from mining is vitally important to help fund many State services and social infrastructure including the areas of health, education and law and order. This income is in the form of royalties paid on coal, mineral and petroleum production, rents on exploration and mining tenures, and returns from rail freights and port charges. The mining and petroleum industries returned royalties of \$1.329 billion to the Queensland Government in 2006–07.

Mining is important in regional Queensland as a major source of direct local employment and investment growth in the local economy. Mining also creates numerous additional indirect jobs by purchasing a wide range of services and materials from support industries within the State. The money that mining companies and mine workers spend in their local communities is important in maintaining strong regional economies.

Local communities also receive benefits from new water, power and transport infrastructure projects which are constructed in association with new mining developments. Mining companies also support their local communities directly through the construction of local facilities and cultural and social activities.