

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1365

asked on Tuesday, 16 October 2018

MR N DAMETTO ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, MINES AND ENERGY (HON DR A LYNHAM)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the resources industry on which Townsville depends for its financial prosperity—

Will the Minister advise whether the government is prepared to invest in a project that would connect the North West Mineral Province to the National Electricity Grid in order to help deliver cheaper electricity that will create jobs for Townsville?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government understands that a secure and affordable energy supply is critical to growing a strong economy and job creation across North Queensland, including in the resources sector which is important to Townsville's financial prosperity. The Palaszczuk Government understands the importance of reliable and affordable energy supply to customers, including the large customers who drive Queensland's economy.

Under the Powering North Queensland Plan, the government is investing \$386 million to strengthen and diversify North Queensland's energy supply, drive economic growth and support jobs.

North Queensland has rich renewable resources which the government is helping to unlock through the 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030. Over the last two years, there has been an unprecedented level of renewable investment in North Queensland.

In the last two years, 930 megawatts of renewable energy projects have commenced operations in North Queensland. These projects have delivered over \$2.1 billion of investment and over 2200 new construction jobs. A further 373 megawatts of projects are under construction, delivering \$840 million of investment and over 800 jobs.

The additional supply from these generators will help put downward pressure on wholesale electricity prices.

As part of this plan, the government is investigating the feasibility of strategic electricity transmission infrastructure and the development of a Clean Energy Hub in North and North-West Queensland.

The government is working closely with Queensland's transmission network service provider, Powerlink, and other industry experts to make sure that any investments in transmission infrastructure will actually lower the cost of electricity for customers in North Queensland.

We are also focussed on supporting a strong and prosperous future for the north-west area of Queensland through other avenues. For example, the government is focussing on developing the potential of this area through the Strategic Blueprint for Queensland's North West Minerals Province. The blueprint contains a suite of actions to secure the long-term future of the region and its communities, including new funding of \$39 million over four years.