



Speech by

Hon. Rachel Nolan

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard Wednesday, 28 October 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coal Industry

Hon. RG NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Transport) (10.17 am): Nearly 40 years after its inception, Central Queensland's coal industry is well capitalised, mature and is showing strong signs of recovery from its recent downturn. In the first quarter of 2009-10, coal exports have rebounded to preglobal financial crisis levels. Although the price of both coking and thermal coal remains below its recent peak, the recovery in volume is a remarkable result for an industry that really suffered as a result of the global recession.

Based on performance so far, we estimate that coal exports will reach 174 million tonnes in 2009-10—a 9.4 per cent increase on the previous year. To put that in context, just 10 years ago Queensland coal exports were only 105 million tonnes. These green shoots are set to continue, with the World Steel Association forecasting 2010 global demand to grow by 9.2 per cent. Queensland is well placed to meet this growth.

Recent expansions include a 13 million tonne upgrade of the Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal, a deal negotiated by a private port on a long-term lease from the Queensland government with privately owned mines and done with private finance.

The government has also recently announced that the future of the Northern Missing Link project is secure following agreement with two coal companies. We always said we would build what the coal companies wanted when they wanted it. That is what we are doing. Since announcing the project other customers are showing strong interest.

Members opposite said that we should build this project without a good commercial deal in place, leaving taxpayers to carry unreasonable risk. This shows how wrong their priorities are. This project, being built to benefit big international private coal companies, can and should be financed privately in the future just like the Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal is at the moment. The implementation of this government's plan to reform Queensland finances will ensure we come out of this stronger.