



Al not going to plan in Premier's mine game

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ANALYSIS

ANNASTACIA Palaszczuk's move to set a deadline for approving Adani's Carmichael coal mine might have stopped the bleeding but it hasn't healed the wound.

Regional Queensland remains a political powderkeg for her government. Over the next 18 months until the state election, any suggestion her administration is favouring inner-city ideology over regional prosperity could be fatal. In fact, electoral repercussions akin to what federal Labor copped last Saturday

may now be inevitable for the Palaszczuk Government.

Many senior figures within Queensland Labor are convinced that's the case.

Deciding what to do about it remains the hot topic of debate. Regardless of whether it's right or wrong, Deputy Premier Jackie Trad has been cast as the villain in the Adani delays and the government's image problem in the regions.

Moving forward with the mine is a loss for Trad and leaves her South Brisbane seat even more vulnerable to a Greens raid. But Right faction figures believe this won't be enough and have been trying

to assemble the numbers necessary to remove her from the deputy leadership.

Calls continued yesterday, with several of Trad's Right-aligned Cabinet colleagues trying to convince backbenchers.

"What are they hoping to gain?" one Cabinet figure said yesterday. "This might be about damaging Jackie, but it will hurt Annastacia."

However, across the factions and senior party figures there's a belief that while Trad might be the symptom, the real problem is Palaszczuk. Before the federal election, internal polling was showing that the Government was

seen as uncaring and inert and its support was shrinking.

They don't think Palaszczuk can turn it around and a new leader – either Kate Jones or Cameron Dick – is the answer.

Attempting to remove Adani as an issue has bought Palaszczuk time at the expense of her deputy. But the Premier is now just a misstep or two away from colleagues deciding she cannot recover.

Spending \$320,000 of taxpayers' funds to let Al Gore lecture Queenslanders on a climate crisis amid a regional jobs crisis of her own may just be the Premier's Bob Brown convoy moment.

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