



QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT **COMMITTEES**

2025-26 Budget Estimates - Appropriation Bill 2025

Primary Industries and Resources Committee



Report No. 8

58th Parliament, August 2025

This page is intentionally blank

Primary Industries and Resources Committee

Chair	Mr Stephen Bennett MP, Member for Burnett
Deputy Chair	Mr James Martin MP, Member for Stretton
Members	Mr Nigel Dalton MP, Member for Mackay
	Mr Robbie Katter MP, Member for Traeger
	Mr Glen Kelly MP, Member for Mirani
	Mr Linus Power MP, Member for Logan (substituting for Mr Tom Smith MP on 6 August 2025 from 9-11.00am)
	Mr Tom Smith MP, Member for Bundaberg

Committee Secretariat

Telephone	+61 7 3553 6621
Email	pirc@parliament.qld.gov.au
Committee Webpage	www.parliament.qld.gov.au/pirc

All references and webpages are current at the time of publishing.

Acknowledgements

The committee acknowledges the assistance provided by:

- Hon. Dale Last MP, Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development, and
- Hon. Tony Perrett MP, Minister for Primary Industries.

The committee also acknowledge the assistance provided by departmental officers who contributed to the work of the committee during the estimates process.

Table of Contents

Chair's Foreword	iii
Executive Summary	iv
Recommendation	v
1. Overview of the Budget Estimates Process.....	1
1.1. Inquiry Process.....	2
1.2. Participation by other Members of Parliament	2
1.3. Should the Proposed Expenditure be agreed to?	3
2. Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development.....	3
2.1. Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development.....	4
2.1.1. Budget Overview	4
i. Trends in Appropriation	4
2.1.2. Budget Highlights - Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development	5
i. Capital program	5
2.1.3. Matters raised during the Estimates Process.....	6
3. Minister for Primary Industries.....	8
3.1. Department of Primary Industries	8
3.1.1. Budget Overview	9
i. Trends in Appropriation	9
3.1.2. Budget Highlights – Department of Primary Industries	9
ii. Capital program	10
3.1.3. Matters raised during the Estimates Process.....	11
Statement of Reservation	13

Chair's Foreword

This report presents a summary of the Primary Industries and Resources Committee's (committee) examination of the Appropriation Bill 2025 and budget estimates for the committee's portfolio areas for the 2025-26 financial year.

Consideration of these estimates allows for the public examination of the proposed expenditure through questioning of responsible Ministers and other officials during a public hearing, and through a question on notice process.

The committee has recommended that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2025 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly.

On behalf of the committee, I thank Minister Dale Last and Minister Tony Perrett, Director-Generals and all department staff who assisted in the Estimates process.

I would also like to thank the members of the committee for their contributions to the estimates process, as well as other members whose participation in the hearing provided additional scrutiny of the estimates.

Finally, I thank the committee's secretariat and other Parliamentary Service staff for their assistance.

I commend this report to the House.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bennett', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stephen Bennett MP

Chair

Executive Summary

On 27 June 2025, the Appropriation Bill 2025 and the estimates for the Primary Industries and Resources Committee (the committee) areas of responsibility were referred to the committee for investigation and report.

The estimates process is one of the key mechanisms to examine government expenditure, performance and effectiveness. By examining and reporting on the proposed expenditures contained in the Bill, the committee assists the Parliament in its scrutiny of the Government's proposed expenditure.

The Appropriation for 2025-26 is \$105,417,248,000.

The committee's examination of the Bill is in relation to the:

- Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development
- Department of Primary Industries.

On 6 August 2025, the committee conducted public hearings and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from the:

- Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development
- Minister for Primary Industries.

This report summarises the estimates referred to the committee and highlights some of the issues the committee examined including information contained in the:

- budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- evidence taken at the hearing.

The committee made one recommendation (found at page v of this report) that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Bill for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

Recommendation

Recommendation 1 3

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2025 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

1. Overview of the Budget Estimates Process

On 27 June 2025, the Appropriation Bill 2025 and the estimates for the Primary Industries and Resources Committee (the committee) areas of responsibility were referred to the committee for investigation and report.¹

The estimates process is one of the key mechanisms to examine government expenditure, performance and effectiveness. By examining and reporting on the proposed expenditures contained in the Appropriation Bill and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill the committee assists the Parliament in its scrutiny of the Government's proposed expenditure.

The Appropriation for 2025-26 is \$105,417,248,000.²

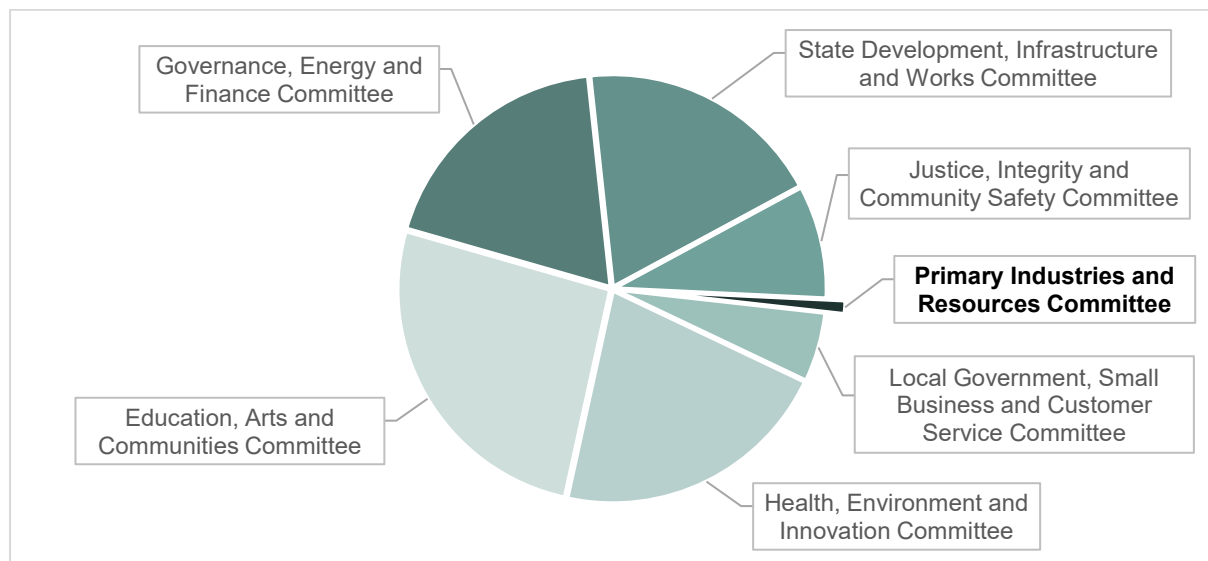
The table and figures below set out the appropriations examined by the committee.

Table 1: All appropriations examined by the committee in this report, 2025-26

Department	Vote 2025-2026 \$'000
Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development	573,512
Department of Primary Industries	494,015
Total appropriation overseen by this committee	1,067,527

Source: Appropriation Bill 2025

Figure 1: Budget appropriations by committee, 2025-26



Source: Appropriation Bill 2025

¹ Standing Order 177 provides for the automatic referral of the Annual Appropriation Bills to portfolio committees once the Bills have been read a second time.

² Appropriation Bill 2025, s 2.

Figure 2: Departmental appropriations examined by this committee, 2025-26

Source: Appropriation Bill 2025

The committee's examination of the Appropriation Bill 2025 is in relation to the:

- Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development
- Department of Primary Industries.³

1.1. Inquiry Process

On 6 August 2025, the committee conducted a public hearing and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development and the Minister for Primary Industries and other witnesses.⁴

This report summarises the estimates referred to the committee and highlights some of the issues the committee examined. The committee considered information contained in:

- budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- evidence taken at the hearing
- additional information given in relation to answers.

Prior to the public hearing, the committee provided the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development and the Minister for Primary Industries with questions on notice in relation to the estimates. Responses to all the questions were received.

Answers to the committee's pre-hearing questions on notice; documents tabled during the hearing; answers and additional information provided by Ministers after the hearing are included in a volume of additional information tabled with this report.

1.2. Participation by other Members of Parliament

The following non-committee Members participated in the hearing with the leave of the committee:

³ Standing Orders, sch 6.

⁴ Queensland Parliament, Record of Proceedings, Estimates Primary Industries and Resources Committee – Brisbane, 6 August 2025.

- Hon Cameron Dick MP, Member for Woodridge
- Dr Christian Rowan MP, Leader of the House.

1.3. Should the Proposed Expenditure be agreed to?

In accordance with Standing Order 187(1), the committee is required to determine and report on whether the proposed expenditure referred to it is agreed to.

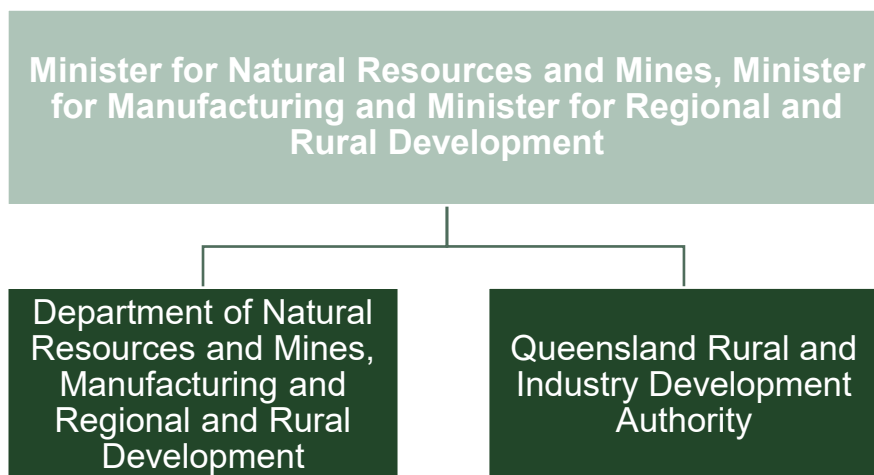


Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2025 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

2. Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development

The Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development has responsibility for the following agencies, services and statutory entities:⁵



To assist the committee with its consideration of portfolio estimates, and in keeping with the requirements of Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders, the chief executives of the following organisations were present at the hearing on 6 August 2025:

- Coexistence Queensland
- Land Access Ombudsman
- Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority
- Resources Safety and Health Queensland.⁶

⁵ Queensland Budget 2025-26, Service Delivery Statements (SDS), Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development (DNRMMRRD), p (i).

⁶ Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders sets out a list of statutory entities to which direct questioning of chief executives at estimates applies.

2.1. Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development

The Honourable Dale Last MP, Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development is the Minister responsible for the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development (DNRMMRRD). DNRMMRRD has 3 service areas as follows:

- land administration and property services
- minerals and energy resources and data services
- drive regional economic growth.⁷

The objectives of these service areas are to:

- optimise the use of land resources to support economic growth and just outcomes for the Queensland community through the provision of modern and effective land administration and property services
- enable a resilient, responsible and sustainable resources industry that grows as it transforms
- lead programs that achieve strong economic and policy outcomes in regional job creation and investment to advance the Queensland manufacturing industry.⁸

2.1.1. Budget Overview

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2025 shows the total appropriation for the department for 2025-26, compared with compared with 2024-25 budgeted and estimated actual appropriations.

Appropriations	Budget 2024-25 \$'000	Est. Actual 2024-25 \$'000	Vote 2025-26 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	436,565	544,713	546,610
equity adjustment	1,355	(126)	5,440
<i>Administered Items</i>	5,950	18,893	21,462
Vote	443,870	563,480	573,512

Source 1. Appropriation Bill 2025, sch 2, p 12.

i. Trends in Appropriation

As a consequence of the recent machinery-of-government changes, the committee accepts that figures from previous budgets are not directly comparable with those of 2025-26.

⁷ Queensland Budget, 2025-26, SDS, DNRMMRRD, pp 3-5.

⁸ Queensland Budget, 2025-26, SDS, DNRMMRRD, pp 3-5.

2.1.2. Budget Highlights - Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development

The 2025-26 budget highlights for the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development include:⁹

Increasing funding for Natural Resource Management groups to protect Queensland's incredible wildlife and crucial areas of biodiversity	\$117.8 million over 4 years
Supporting the Transforming Queensland Manufacturing program to facilitate pathways to export opportunities and enable reshoring and onshoring by Queensland manufacturers, enhancing manufacturing sovereignty, encouraging investment, and addressing ongoing disruptions to supply chains	\$79.1 million over 3 years
Supporting the manufacturing industry through the establishment of 2 new Queensland Manufacturing hubs in the Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba	\$10 million over 3 years
Supporting preparation for operation of the Queensland Resources Common User Facility	\$8.5 million in 2025–26
Accelerating mineral exploration through investment in geoscience activities and data technologies to provide industry ready data	\$5.1 million in 2025–26

i. Capital program

The DNRMMRRD's planned capital program for 2025-26 is \$105.2 million. This includes capital purchases of \$24.9 million and capital grants of \$80.3 million.¹⁰ The capital program includes:

- investments in digital solutions to support the vast datasets used to stimulate economic development in Queensland
- other critical property, plant and equipment assets to meet service delivery requirements
- grant programs to industry and regional communities to support industry capability, economic development, and safety and liveability in Queensland regional communities.¹¹

Specific program highlights include:

- \$2.4 million for the purchase of key plant and equipment to support preparation for operation of the Queensland Resources Common User Facility
- \$900,000 to sustain improving and maintaining stock route water facilities across the state to ensure their safe and efficient operation

⁹ Queensland Budget, 2025-26, SDS, DNRMMRRD, p 2.

¹⁰ Queensland Budget, 2025-26, Capital Statement - Budget Paper No. 3, p 55.

¹¹ Queensland Budget, 2025-26, Capital Statement - Budget Paper No. 3, p 55.

- \$25 million for the Transforming Queensland Manufacturing Program to facilitate pathways to export opportunities and enable reshoring and onshoring by Queensland manufacturers, enhancing manufacturing sovereignty, encouraging investment, and addressing ongoing disruptions to supply chains
- \$18.8 million for the Building our Regions Program to assist water service providers to deliver projects that create regional and economic development opportunities, support local industry growth, and improve liveability in Queensland's regional communities.¹²

2.1.3. Matters raised during the Estimates Process

Matters raised during the committee's examination of the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development are below:

Matters considered in relation to the Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development portfolio areas	Pre-hearing questions on notice
Indigenous Land Use Agreements Support Package	1
Glencore Mount Isa copper mine and smelter, Townsville copper refinery – closure	2
Limited life programs ceased in 2024-25	3
Queensland Train Manufacturing Program – responsibility, delivery dates, workforce, Torbanlea and Maryborough facilities	4, 10
Grant programs relating to economic growth in regional and rural communities	5
Transforming Queensland Manufacturing program	6, 14
Assessment of mining leases – timeframes	7
Abandoned Mine Lands Program	8
Double Island lease	9
Toowoomba and Sunshine Coast manufacturing hubs	11
Regional forums	12
Gas exploration and supply	13, 20
Natural Resource Management Expansion Program	15
Minister's trade mission to the United States and Canada	16
Safety in the resources sector	17
Mining project approvals	18
Grant funding – regional distribution	19

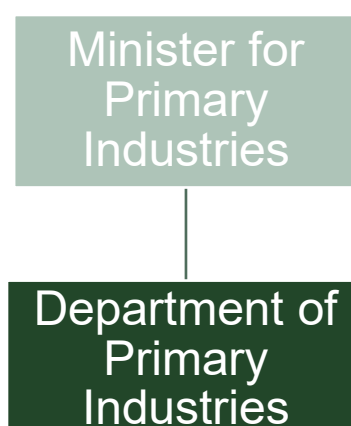
¹² Queensland Budget, 2025-26, Capital Statement - Budget Paper No. 3, p 55.

	Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 6 August 2025, page no.
Engagement of Ian Davies by DNRMMRRD	3, 4, 13
Progressive coal royalties	4-8
Glencore Mount Isa copper mine and smelter, Townsville copper refinery – closure	8-9, 11-14, 41-42
Gas exploration and supply	9,41
Safety in the resources sector	9-10
Queensland Resources Common User Facility	10
Investment North-West Queensland	11
Bowen Coking Coal – assistance	15
Assistance for mining companies	15-16
Minister's trade mission to the United States and Canada	16
Natural Resource Management, wildlife and biodiversity projects	17
Recreational fossicking	17
Resources Cabinet Committee – expediting timeframes	17-18
Critical Minerals Strategy – mineral exploration	18-19, 21
Coalmining lease renewals	19
Adani – royalties, conflict of interest	19-20
Collaborative Exploration Initiative	20-21
Queensland Law Reform Commission mining lease objections review	21
E-conveyancing	22
Double Island and Keswick Island leases	22-23
Stock routes – updated operational policy	23
Queensland Train Manufacturing Program – delivery dates, workforce, Torbanlea and Maryborough facilities	25-31, 37
Transforming Queensland Manufacturing Program	29-32
Manufacturing industry strategy, Queensland Manufacturing Advisory Council	31-22
Building our Regions program	32-33
Queensland Battery Industry Strategy, battery manufacturing, industry viability	33-36
Regional forums	36,39
Women in Manufacturing sponsorship of North Queensland Cowboys	38
TAFE centre of excellence, Moreton Bay – advanced manufacturing	38-39
Regional Collaborative Governance Model	39-40

Country Roads Connect Program	40-42
CopperString – delivery timeframes	42
Viability of mines in the North West Minerals Province	42
Rail track fees – North West Minerals Province	42
Biofuels mandates	42-43
Maternity services at Biloela – doctors	43
Support for teachers in regional and rural Queensland	43
Removal of the health rural and regional workforce incentive scheme	44
Advanced Robotics for Manufacturing Hub	44
Northern Australia Ministerial Forum and the prosperity of rural and regional communities.	45
Disaster assistance for farmers	45-46

3. Minister for Primary Industries

The Minister for Primary Industries has responsibility for the following department:¹³



3.1. Department of Primary Industries

The Honourable Tony Perrett MP, Minister for Primary Industries, is the Minister responsible for the Department of Primary Industries (DPI). DPI has 3 service areas as follows:

- enabling primary industries prosperity
- Queensland Biosecurity Services
- fisheries and forestry industry development.¹⁴

The objectives of these services areas are to:

¹³ Queensland Budget 2025-26, SDS, DPI, p (i).

¹⁴ Queensland Budget, 2025-26, SDS, DPI, pp 3-8.

- enable Queensland primary producers to prosper by delivering innovative research, policy and support services that support a productive, profitable and sustainable sector
- to mitigate the risks and impacts of animal and plant pests and diseases and weeds to the economy, the environment, social amenity, and human health, and uphold standards for animal welfare and agricultural chemical use in line with community expectations
- to ensure sustainable, high-value fisheries and fishing experiences and the responsible management and use of state-owned timber and quarry resources.¹⁵

3.1.1. Budget Overview

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2025 shows the total appropriation for the department for 2025-26, compared with compared with 2024-25 budgeted and estimated actual appropriations.

Appropriations	Budget 2024-25 \$'000	Est. Actual 2024-25 \$'000	Vote 2025-26 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	406,474	490,596	462,002
equity adjustment	3,778	(11,055)	89
<i>Administered Items</i>	48,395	50,120	31,924
Vote	458,647	529,661	494,015

Source 2. Appropriation Bill 2025, sch 2, p 12.

i. Trends in Appropriation

As a consequence of the recent machinery-of-government changes, the committee accepts that figures from previous budgets are not directly comparable with those of 2025-26.

3.1.2. Budget Highlights – Department of Primary Industries

The 2025-26 budget highlights for the Department of Primary Industries include:¹⁶

Providing for the Sowing the Seeds of Farming Innovation Fund to promote new technologies and practices by backing Queensland-first projects to future-proof the industry and supporting increasing primary production output to \$30 billion by 2030	\$30 million
Tackling emerging biosecurity threats in Queensland by hiring 100 additional frontline biosecurity officers	\$60.9 million over 5 years and \$19.2 million ongoing from 2029–30

¹⁵ Queensland Budget, 2025-26, SDS, DPI, pp 3-8.

¹⁶ Queensland Budget, 2025-26, SDS, DPI, p 2.

Supporting delivery of the Farm Business Resilience Program and Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program, subject to matched contribution from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund, and delivery of Drought Preparedness Grants	\$51.9 million over 4 years
Supporting local cane growers in the Mossman community following closure of the Mossman Mill	\$6.7 million as part of \$12.5 million over 3 years
Providing for a bigger and better Beef 2027	\$4.5 million over 2 years

ii. Capital program

The DPI's planned capital program for 2025-26 is \$22.5 million.¹⁷ The capital program focuses on developing and upgrading departmental infrastructure to deliver outcomes for agriculture, biosecurity, fisheries and forestry, and includes:

- investments in digital solutions to support the vast datasets used to stimulate economic development in Queensland
- other critical property, plant and equipment assets to meet service delivery requirements
- grant programs to industry and regional communities to support industry capability, economic development, and safety and liveability in Queensland regional communities.¹⁸

Program highlights include:

- \$3.4 million to finalise the Master Plan and AgTech Infrastructure Development at Emerald
- \$3.3 million to continue to replace and upgrade vessels and marine equipment for fisheries research and support of regulatory functions
- \$1.8 million to construct a purpose-built six-bay Glasshouse at Gatton Research Facility
- \$1.7 million to upgrade the Wild Dog Barrier Fence
- \$1.2 million for the construction of infrastructure to support the Building Resilience to Manage Fruit Fly Project at Redlands Research Centre
- \$900,000 for the refurbishment of the Hope Harbour Marina Precinct
- \$840,000 to support the Aquaculture Transformation program, contributing to the development of a diverse aquaculture industry at Bribie Island Research Centre
- \$784,000 for major upgrades to site infrastructure including water mains and air handling systems across multiple research facilities including Tick Fever Centre and Gatton Research Facility.¹⁹

¹⁷ Queensland Budget, 2025-26, Capital Statement - Budget Paper No. 3, p 58.

¹⁸ Queensland Budget, 2025-26, Capital Statement - Budget Paper No. 3, p 58.

¹⁹ Queensland Budget, 2025-26, Capital Statement - Budget Paper No. 3, p 58.

3.1.3. Matters raised during the Estimates Process

Matters raised during the committee's examination of the Department of Primary Industries are below:

Matters considered in relation to the Primary Industries portfolio area	Pre-hearing questions on notice
Biosecurity	1, 9, 20
Department name change – cost	2
Primary Industries production output goals	3
Sustainable Fisheries Strategy	4
Support for Queensland Dairy Industry	5
Shark Control Program	6, 13
Use of agricultural land by third parties	7
Queensland Timber Action Plan	8, 18
Feral pigs	10
Fisheries management, commercial and recreational fishing	11, 14, 15
Illegal fishing	12
Far North Queensland Cane Expansion Plan	16
Primary production research, AgTech	17
Primary production output and irrigated farming	19
	Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 6 August 2025, page no.
Cattle rustling, rural crime	48-51
Ministerial staff terminations or resignations, gifts, complaints	51
Biosecurity – role and powers of biosecurity officers, rollout of additional officers, officers in the Gulf of Carpentaria and Cape York regions	51, 53-54, 55-56, 81-82
Spanish mackerel stock assessment – biomass targets, UNESCO agreement, recreational fisher consultation, economic modelling	52, 64-65, 75-77
Timber supplies, home building, Queensland Future Timber Plan	53
Natural disaster support for primary producers, flooding in 2025	54, 78
Shark control management plan, culls, drumlines and nets, Dr Colin Simpfendorfer	56-59
Prosper 2050 blueprint – stakeholders in Mackay, consultation of recreational fishers, goal to boost primary production output to \$30 billion 2030	59, 71, 74
National Fire Ant Eradication Program, Fire Ant Suppression Taskforce, aerial suppression activities, impact of weather	60-63
Cattle numbers in Cape York	63
Conversion of pastoral leases to national parks in Far North Queensland	63-64

Water security and agriculture in North Queensland, including Flinders River	64
Net zero projects and livestock contamination	65-66
Viability of the commercial fishing industry, support for commercial fishers	66, 72
Sugarcane industry support – Mossman region	67
Beef Week funding	67
Agricultural innovation funding	68
Bega Group's closure of facilities in Kingaroy and Tolga – meetings with workers	68-69
Gillnet fishing in South-East Queensland – complaints, photographs, threats	69-71
Supply of quarry material	72-73
Varroa mite – impact on the bee industry, department control measures	73
Sustainable Fisheries Strategy, biomass targets	74-75
Scallop stock assessment, economic modelling	75-77
Phasing out of gillnet fishing in the Great Barrier Reef	76-77
Direct investment into Queensland's beef industry	77
Minister's conflict management plan	77-78
Agricultural research, AgTech	78-80
Agricultural trade relationships	80
Closure of agricultural collages	81
Management of weeds and feral pests	82
Changes to reef regulations	83
Funding of the Food Farmers' Commissioner	83-84

Statement of Reservation



Statement of Reservation

Primary Industries and
Resources Committee

Appropriation Bill 2025





Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands, seas, skies and waterways from across Queensland.

We pay our respect to the Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This artwork by The Hon LEEANNE ENOCH MP is called "The Power of Many" from her "Connections" series. It represents the paths we take to reach our goals and the many important and often powerful connections we make with each other along the way.

Queensland Labor Opposition

The Queensland Labor Opposition thanks public sector employees right across Queensland for the work that they do each and every day on behalf of all Queenslanders. Without over 270,000 full-time equivalent public sector roles in Queensland undertaking that work, Queenslanders would not have access to the services and support that they need and deserve.

In particular, the Queensland Labor Opposition thanks all public servants involved in the preparation of Budget Estimates. Preparing for a Budget Estimates process is a monumental task that can involve hundreds of staff to not only attend the public hearings but also prepare briefing materials and gather information.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND MINING

COAL ROYALTIES' CONFUSION

The Queensland Labor Opposition highlighted grave concerns for the continuation of Queensland's Progressive Coal Royalties beyond 2028, as the committee was not afforded a direct answer from either the Minister or the Director-General.

Despite advising mining stakeholders at a closed-door event that the Crisafulli LNP Government was considering a royalties model that *"meets everyone's expectations"*, when questioned in the estimates hearing about the continuation of coal royalties the Minister advised the committee that *"the matter of coal royalties sits within the Treasurer's ambit and, of course, cabinet deliberations."*¹

In washing his hands of responsibility for the matter the Minister has undermined his credibility with key stakeholders, highlighting a not so honest approach, in the view of the Queensland Labor Opposition to handling important relationships.

Due to the Minister's inability to provide clarity regarding the future of coal royalties in Queensland, and the ongoing contradicting reassurances to industry stakeholders, Queenslanders are left without answers. This damages investment certainty in mining in Queensland and at the same time undermines the credibility of Queensland's fiscal position.

CONSULTING JOBS FOR DONORS

One of the most concerning revelations of the Natural Resources and Mining estimates hearing, was the decision to engage Mr Ian Davies as a consultant to the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development for a period of up to 25 days.

For that 25-day period, the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development will pay Mr Ian Davies a total of \$187,500.

When asked about the initial recommendation of Mr Ian Davies, the Director-General stated, *"Mr Davies was engaged as a result of conversations between me and the Minister ..."*²

Mr Ian Davies, who advised the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development that he had no conflicts of interest to declare, was found to have made a donation to the Liberal National Party of \$2,000 only weeks prior to the October 2024 State Election.

Despite being appointed to provide consultation on issues surrounding Glencore's operations in Mt Isa, the Director-General was unable to advise the committee on whether Mr Ian Davies had any experience of base-metals in North West Queensland.

The Queensland Labor Opposition is concerned by the diversion of departmental funds to offer comfortable consulting jobs to LNP donors of the Crisafulli LNP Government. Despite both the Premier and Treasurer

¹ https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2025/2025_08_06_EstimatesPIC.pdf page 8

² https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2025/2025_08_06_EstimatesPIC.pdf page 3

Queensland Labor Opposition

promising Queensland they would have respect for taxpayer money, the 2025 Estimates Hearings have revealed that this is a far stretch from the truth. These sentiments were also reflected by both the Courier Mail and the Brisbane Times who published articles following the revelations (see Appendix).

MOUNT ISA COPPER SMELTER

The Queensland Labor Opposition recognises the importance of the Mount Isa Copper Smelter, it is the lifeblood of Western Queensland, supporting thousands of jobs and backing our state's critical mineral economy.

It is alarming to get a glimpse into the lack of preparedness by the Crisafulli LNP Government, to address an issue they have known about for a significant amount of time. Not only did the Minister not want to admit that they knew of the impending closure of the smelter since as early as February 2025, but the hearing highlighted a complete lack of accountability from the Crisafulli LNP Government to address the concerns of Glencore.

Glencore has yet to reach a resolution with the state government, with Chief Executive Officer Gary Nagle having to defend the company's contributions to the Australian economy.

COLLABORATIVE EXPLORATION INITIATIVE - CUTS

Further adding to the Crisafulli LNP Government's failure to support Queensland's western province and the critical minerals sector was the axing of the Collaborative Exploration Initiative which provided explorers with grant funding to progress critical mineral exploration activities, particularly helpful for new or unestablished businesses or individuals.

The Association of Mining and Exploration Companies called the move "*deeply disappointing*", advising Queensland could risk losing investment opportunities as a result of the funding cut.

The Queensland Labor Opposition finds it difficult to comprehend this decision given the Minister was quoted in his opening statement saying that his "*focus has been to restore confidence, cut delays and rebuild trust with the industries that underpin our economy.*"³

It is evident that now more than ever the mining and explorations sectors operating in the Western Province deserve respect and trust, and by cutting Collaborative Exploration Initiative Grants, the Minister and his Government have completely undermined that.

MANUFACTURING AND REGIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT

QUEENSLAND TRAIN MANUFACTURING PROGRAM

The Queensland Train Manufacturing Program is a key Labor initiative that sought to bring jobs and economic stimulation to the Fraser Coast, while providing Queensland with the trains we need to keep our state moving.

The Queensland Labor Opposition is gravely concerned that under the mismanagement of the Crisafulli LNP Government, the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program has fallen off track, as delays to the program were revealed during the estimates process.

Minister Last stated, "*train 1 manufacture is on schedule for delivery in 2027*",⁴ however based on the advice provided by the Director-General of the Department of Transport and Main Roads during the 2024 Manufacturing Estimates hearing, that would indicate a calendar year delay in delivery. The Transport and

³ https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2025/2025_08_06_EstimatesPIC.pdf page 2

⁴ https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2025/2025_08_06_EstimatesPIC.pdf page 25

Queensland Labor Opposition

Main Roads website on the date of the hearing also stated that the first train would be delivered for testing in “late 2026” (see Appendix).

The people of Queensland deserve transparency and honesty from their Ministers.

The delay of these vital trains not only highlights the deception of the Crisafulli LNP Government but also their incompetence. Further to this point, the Queensland Labor Opposition was unable to establish a straight answer from the Minister regarding when all 65 Queensland Train Manufacturing Program trains would be delivered.

In addition to this, the inability of the Director-General of the Department of Transport and Main Roads to confirm the advice that was provided by Downer regarding the completion of construction of the site at Torbanlea, which was originally planned for the end of 2025 is concerning.

The Queensland Labor Opposition holds apprehensions over whether the Minister’s inability to disclose important information stems from secrecy or a lack of understanding. In fact, it remains unclear as to whether the Minister ever understood the difference between the workforces at Maryborough and Torbanlea, after lengthy, specified questioning failed to gather clarity.

REGIONAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural and regional communities throughout Queensland rely on important Government grant funding that assists in stimulating economic growth and allowing businesses to prosper. The Queensland Labor Opposition confirmed that the Crisafulli LNP Government has cut the *Building our Regions* program following six rounds of grants.

This decision is not only extremely disappointing but highlights a complete disregard for the communities that have directly benefitted from the program.

The Estimates hearing also revealed that Minister Last had not been consulted by Deputy Premier Bleijie regarding the decision to cut the Queensland Battery Industry Strategy, which highlights the Crisafulli LNP Government’s considerable disregard for impact on regional and rural communities that would have benefitted from the government’s investment in this industry’s progression.

It was also highlighted in the Estimates hearing that the statements made by the Deputy Premier regarding “non-viable industries...”⁵ stand in stark contrast to the statements of the Director-General responsible for the Manufacturing portfolio, who claimed the “the future of that [battery] industry in this state I think has a positive future.”⁶

The Queensland Labor Opposition welcomes Minister Last’s commitment to publish the list of participants, forum agendas and outcomes of the Roma and Emerald Regional Forums and seek confirmation that this will be continued for all regional forums in the future.

Finally, the Queensland Labor Opposition condemns Minister Last’s statement that regional hospitality workers in the electorate of Mirani will be replaced with robots.

“Member for Mirani, in the not-too-distant future, as we saw on my last visit, you will be served at your local Macca’s by a robot. That technology is being finalised as we sit here today.”⁷

⁵ <https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/com/SDIWC-1AF9/C20252026-4826/Proof%20-%20Public%20Hearing%20held%20on%2030%20July%202025.pdf> page 16

⁶ https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2025/2025_08_06_EstimatesPIC.pdf page 33

⁷ https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2025/2025_08_06_EstimatesPIC.pdf page 45

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

FARMERS ARE VICTIMS OF CRIME TOO

Before the 2024 state election, the Leader of the Opposition, now Premier David Crisafulli vowed to resign if he and his government failed to reduce the number of victims of crime.

Rather than fulfilling this pledge, Premier Crisafulli has redefined “victim” to exclude “other theft,” a category encompassing livestock and produce theft affecting primary producers. This decision, scrutinised during budget estimates, implies that even the Minister for Primary Industries, a victim of cattle theft, is not considered a victim.

The Queensland Labor Opposition firmly maintains that all landowners subjected to crime are victims and reaffirms its commitment to the safety and well-being of Queensland’s primary producers.

We note that the Minister, when asked whether he accepted that if a primary producer is a victim of theft, they are hence a victim of crime, responded “*any crime is a crime*,” strongly contrasting the sentiments of Premier Crisafulli.⁸

BIOSECURITY OFFICERS

The Queensland Labor Opposition notes that there is a discrepancy between the Minister’s Charter Letter and the Service Delivery Statement in terms of the interpretation of Biosecurity Officers and Staff, and the length of time in which to deliver 100 individuals to act as Biosecurity Officers.

Neither the Director-General, nor the Minister were able to confirm whether the timeline for completing the election commitment of 100 Biosecurity Officers would be four years or five years.

SHARK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Queensland Labor Opposition remains committed to the safety of beachgoers in Queensland and believe it is important to note that the Minister is quoted in a Ministerial Media Statement that “*the best science must inform our actions when it comes to fisheries*”.⁹

Despite this, the Minister was unable to provide any insight into the resignation of Australia’s leading shark scientist for the state’s Scientific Advisory Group. This resignation followed the announcement of the Shark Control Program, which was also labelled as “*unscientific*” by AMCS.

The Queensland Labor Opposition also notes that there was no modelling provided to the committee that could indicate how lethal control measures would decrease the likelihood of bites and attacks from targeted species.

SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND GILLNETTING

The Queensland Labor Opposition is concerned that the Minister for Primary Industries has not responded to at least 31 pieces of correspondence alleging illegal fishing activity in the Logan and Albert River.

It is noted that the Minister has only met with one recreational fisher in regards to the Logan and Albert River complaints – and this was only due to the Minister being approached at a public event, which did not result in the Minister taking the fisher’s details or name.

⁸ https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2025/2025_08_06_EstimatesPIC.pdf page 50

⁹ <https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/102611>

Queensland Labor Opposition

The Queensland Labor Opposition condemns Minister Perrett for suggesting that illegal fishing activity is a result of licence changes installed previously, given that there was no consultation done by the Minister or Ministerial staff with the recreational fishers who were alleging the concerns.

RECREATIONAL FISHERS

It is extremely disappointing to see that there was a lack of consultation with recreational fishers in relation to the 2050 Prosper Draft Blueprint. Recreational fishers are an important stakeholder in the primary industries realm and deserve to be acknowledged in the same way the Crisafulli LNP Government has acknowledged commercial fishers.

It should be noted the resounding disappointment through the recreational fishing sector regarding the announcement to change the Spanish Mackerel biomass target and possible future changes to the SFS 60% biomass targets.

The Queensland Labor Opposition notes the concerns of recreational fishers as to how the re-targeting of biomass percentage is being determined by the department and emphasise the need for complete transparency and accountability on the part of the Crisafulli LNP Government. This is highlighted in an article published by Mirage News on the 7 August.

ESTIMATES PROCESS

The Budget Estimates process is a cornerstone of our democracy in Queensland. For years it has been an opportunity for elected Members of Parliament, in particular non-government Members of Parliament to ask questions of Ministers and senior public servants to hold the elected government to account.

During the 2024 estimates process, the former Labor Government under the direction of then Labor Premier Steven Miles insisted that additional transparency measures were put in place to ensure that non-government Members of Parliament had ample opportunity to hold the elected government to account. These included:

- Providing crossbench Members of Parliament the ability to ask a pre-hearing Question on Notice for any Minister, regardless of if they were a member of the portfolio committee.
- Strictly allocating government and non-government Members of Parliament time in respect of questions. That being that government Members of Parliament questions should not exceed 30% of the total allocated time and the remaining time, 70% for non-government Members of Parliament.
- Of the time allocated for non-government Members of Parliament it should be proportioned between Opposition and crossbench Members of Parliament, based on the proportion of the makeup at the time.
- Only one opening statement per Minister for their entire portfolio of no longer than five minutes, with the Premier allocated no longer than 10 minutes.

These transparency enhancements to the Budget Estimates process, introduced by the former Labor Government, were discarded by Premier David Crisafulli and the LNP Government.

This is despite in 2020 the Courier Mail revealing the then LNP Leader of the Opposition's views on the Estimates process, reporting:

Queensland Labor Opposition

- He [David Crisafulli] said that if the government did not accept “the need to make changes”, he would introduce them as Premier from the first hearings of the next term in 2024 – if the LNP wins power at the 2024 election.

The changes that were being referred to included:

- increasing the time available to examine the expenditure to ensure adequate questioning can occur;
- an Opposition or cross bench member to chair the committees to help ensure a fairer go;
- limiting the opportunity for ‘Dorothy Dixers’ questions from Government members which exist simply to allow ministers to wind down the clock.

While on paper there was more time overall for the hearings, the way in which Government Members conducted themselves with points of order to chew up time, and the removal of the 70% vs 30% time split, actually resulted in less time for the Opposition and Crossbench to ask questions to hold the government to account.

These actions were the very things that then LNP Leader of the Opposition David Crisafulli criticised. In the article referenced, he said:

“We’ve also seen ministers answer questions directed to independent public servants and Government members interrupting with tedious points of order to use up Opposition members’ time.

It is the Queensland Labor Opposition’s view that it is clear that the promises made by the then LNP in Opposition have been broken.

This Budget Estimates there was nothing revolutionary about the way the hearings were conducted - ‘dorothy dixers’ still occurred and frivolous points of order were constantly taken.

Further information and analysis about the 2025 Budget Estimates can be found in the Statement of Reservation attached to the report on the *Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025*.

CONCLUSION

The 2025 Budget Estimates process was an opportunity for the Crisafulli LNP Government to deliver on its promises – promises to reform, to do better, for a fresh start. Instead, the bar was set so low it was on the floor.

Instead of delivering for Queensland, the Crisafulli LNP Government is delivering for itself. When it comes to accountability, this process laid bare the truth of a government that has failed to live up to its own words. What resounds is that the Crisafulli LNP Government continues to choose secrecy over transparency and political games over genuine accountability.

The LNP Government’s obsession with self-interest over public interest was glaring. The people of modern Queensland expect a government that acts for them, not for themselves. They want a government that embraces the values of openness, fairness and integrity – after all, that’s what they were sold at the 2024 Election.

Instead of being an opportunity for genuine interrogation of the 2025 Budget, the Estimates process was muddled to avoid scrutiny. By placing political convenience above the democratic process that is Budget Estimates, the Crisafulli LNP Government outed itself as out of step with the priorities of Queenslanders.

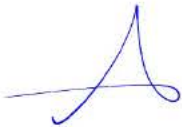
Queensland Labor Opposition

This is not the “fresh start” that was promised, it is a step back.

Queenslanders deserve better.



JAMES MARTIN MP
MEMBER FOR STRETTON
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE



TOM SMITH MP
MEMBER FOR BUNDABERG
SHADOW MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
SHADOW MINISTER FOR MANUFACTURING

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE QUEENSLAND LABOR OPPOSITION

APPENDIX – MEDIA ARTICLES

The Courier Mail *We're for you*

Thursday, August 7, 2025 couriermail.com.au | \$3.50, incl. GST

MADGE'S CHALLENGE TO BRONCOS

MUNSTER SET FOR MEGA PAY DAY

PLUS MID-SEASON REPORT CARD

FOOTY LIFTOUT INSIDE

DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE?

SHOW ME THE MONEY

SPORT

FOX League

EV range boast fail

Thomas Henry

Chinese electric vehicles that should be able to travel from Brisbane to Agnes Water on a single charge are instead only making it as far as Bundaberg – falling more than 100km short. Australian Automotive Association tests found the BYD ATTO3 only travelled 369km on a charge – far less than the advertised 480km range. **Report P3**

\$441m to fix schools

EXCLUSIVE Mikaela Mulveney

Queensland students are being forced to learn in deteriorating classrooms with crumbling roofs, mould and termite damage due to years of underfunding, a new report reveals. Taxpayers will now have to fork out \$441m to urgently clear the maintenance backlog. **Report P18**

CONSULTANT GETS \$187K FOR A 25-DAY JOB

NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT

Hayden Johnson

Last about the resources industry in northwest Queensland. The former energy executive is being paid \$187,500 for up to 25 days' work, equating to an eye-watering \$7500 per day – double the \$84,078 annual pay of a first-year teacher. **Report P7**

An LNP donor has been quietly handed a \$187,500 government contract for just 25 days of work – and Resources Minister Dale Last won't reveal what he's delivered. Ian Davies (right) was appointed to provide "special analysis" to Mr.

INSIDE TODAY

Chalmers warned on tax

Treasurer Jim Chalmers has been warned to stay away from negative gearing, with economists saying tinkering with tax will only worsen the homes crisis. **Report P2**

2032 Games crisis warning

The man who set the 'gold standard' for Olympic and Paralympic Games delivery has warned Brisbane to be prepared for an inevitable crisis. **Report P4**

New Sandstone Point plan

Developers have unveiled plans for a \$250m redevelopment of Sandstone Point just north of Brisbane, aiming to transform the strip. **Report P13**

Music legend Col Joye dies

Australian music has lost a legend with the death of pioneering singer, songwriter and musical entrepreneur Col Joye at the age of 89. **Report P19**

VI | 804522319A

25-day gig pays \$187.5k

By Hayden Johnson

The Courier Mail

Thursday 7th August 2025

462 words

Page 7 | Section: NEWS 07

243cm on the page



25-day gig pays \$187.5k

LNP donor gets \$7500 a day

Hayden Johnson

A LNP donor has been quietly handed a \$187,500 government contract for just 25 days of work – and Resources Minister Dale Last won't reveal what he's delivered.

Ian Davies was appointed to provide special analysis to Mr Last about the resources industry in northwest Queensland.

The former energy executive is being paid \$187,500 for up to 25 days' work, equating to an eye-watering \$7500 per day – double the \$84,078 annual pay of a first-year teacher.

No independent merit-based recruitment process was undertaken, the appointment a result of "conversations" between Mr Last and his director-general Graham Fraine. There is no suggestion Mr Davies is

not qualified for the role.

Mr Davies quit as CEO of natural gas producer Senex in January after almost 15 years.

He was engaged by the government from March to December, with his billable hours totalling 25 days.

In August last year – two months before the state election – Mr Davies donated \$2000 to the LNP, according to electoral donor records. He is not accused of wrongdoing.

Mr Last said Mr Davies had been engaged to provide specialist technical advice to secure future mining opportunities in the northwest.

His diary reveals he had two stakeholder meetings with Mr Davies on March 11 and April 3. The pair met again on June 2.

Mr Fraine said Mr Davies was qualified to advise the gov-

ernment. "Mr Davies brings a decade of leadership in both the energy use resources sector in this state, having facili-

tated transformation of a lot of things in the space that he has worked in," he said.

"North West Minerals Province, a space the size of Victoria ... five Tasmanias, is an area that we are very focused on in regards to its future both as the minister mentioned in terms of negotiations with Glencore but also more broadly."

Shadow treasurer Shannon Fentiman accused the government of diminishing integrity.

"To give an LNP donor a huge contract for, at most, 25 days' work without proper process reeks and Queenslanders shouldn't accept it," she said.

"Queenslanders deserve better from Premier (David) Crisafulli, not just because that's what he promised, or because he is spending their money while doing it, but because it is the right thing to do."

The latest appointment comes a week after Finance Minister Ros Bates said the "jobs for mates" era was over.

It was revealed last week former LNP politician Julian Simmonds had been appointed acting CEO of Economic Development Queensland after conversations with State Development Minister Jarrod Bleijie's chief of staff.

Mr Simmonds could also be permanently appointed without an external recruitment process, at odds with what Mr Bleijie previously said.



Ian Davies

state political editor

Resources department paid \$187k to industry figure for 25 days' work

Matt Dennien and Marissa Calligeros

August 6, 2025 — 10:00am

Save

Share

[A](#) [A](#) [A](#)

Queensland's Resources Department paid \$187,500 to industry figure Ian Davies for up to 25 days of "strategic analysis" of the state's north-west mineral region and talks with Swiss mining giant Glencore.

Director-general Graham Fraine confirmed the arrangement at a parliamentary estimates hearing, but would not be drawn on whether he knew of a donation to the LNP in Davies' name.

Davies left his role leading major east-coast gas producer Senex Energy, part owned by Gina Rinehart's Hancock Prospecting, in January after almost 15 years.



Queensland Labor Opposition

Brisbane Today ☀️ 11°/22° >

The Courier Mail
We're for you

[My News](#) [Today's Paper](#) [Local](#) [QLD](#) [National](#) [World](#) [Education](#) **NEW** [Health](#) [Opinion](#) [Business](#) [Entertainment](#) [L](#)

Business

Glencore CEO Nagle defends miner's commitment to Australia

CEO Gary Nagle has hit back at suggestions the mining giant owes Mount Isa a debt, revealing the company has contributed more than \$100bn to Australia's economy in six years.



Brad Thompson

[Follow](#)

🕒 3 min read August 7, 2025 - 9:02AM [The Australian Business Network](#)

[0 Comments](#) [A A](#)



A

Townsville Bulletin
Tuesday 22nd April 2025
484 words
Page 4 | Section: General
270cm on the page



Queensland Legislative Assembly
Number: 5825T415
01 MAY 2025
MP: Hon Dick
Clerk's Signature: [Signature]
Tabled ☒
By Leave ☐

Miners want lower royalties

Chris Burns

Queensland miners fear the impacts of global market disruptions and tit-for-tat trade wars, but they say investment confidence would improve if the state government reduced coal royalties and pushed through mine approvals as promised.

A report of mining executives' concerns compiled of Queensland Resources Council members refers consistently to increased costs, unclear regulation, and unrest as economic tensions remain volatile between the US and China.

A third of surveyed mining executives also believe demand for their product will be reduced in the next year.

But 65 of hundred miners are positive about future projects, believing demand will be reinvigorated within the next five years as the world's economies seek critical minerals to build renewable energy technology.

QRC lists 62 of its 'full' company members, with more than half representing the coal industry, many of which re-mained concerned about tiered coal royalties calculated to tonnage value which came into ef-

fect in 2022 when value peaked, giving a multi-billion dollar sugar-hit to the Queensland Treasury.

A complaint from a member within the report was, "we could have saved more cash reserves to ride the current price downturn cycle."

QRC chief executive Janette Hewson said the industry was heartened by the state government's intention to decrease approval times through the establishment of the resources cabinet committee.

"As we saw with President Trump's announcement that the US will pursue a greater

share of the global coal export market, it's crucial that Queensland streamlines approvals to keep our state competitive," Ms Hewson said.

"The global energy transition is seen by member company CEOs as good news for the Queensland resources sector, driving increased demand for our coal, gas and critical minerals required to ensure a reliable and sustainable energy supply and to develop the renewable technology to support the transition."

Addressing the mining industry last month, Resources Minister Dale Last said the

"simplest way" to adapt to future US tariffs was to abolish the Australian Government's Safeguard Mechanism aimed at lowering industrial facilities' emissions.

"You don't fight a tariff by imposing another one, you don't make industry stronger by taxing them out of existence," he said.

Mr Last also vowed to cut down on approval time frames, setting an ambitious goal of seven years to approve a green-fields site - a quarter of the average US time frame.

Asked by a QRC member to address "the elephant in the

room" and to axe the tiered coal royalties, Mr Last said the government was considering a model "that meets everyone's expectations".

An annual mining survey by Canadian research group Fraser Institute lists Queensland as the third most attractive Australian jurisdiction, after WA and NT, and was the 13th most favourable place in the world to invest in.

While minerals potential in WA was the world's best and Queensland was 12th, the market was less enthused with Australian mining policies, pushing Queensland back to 23rd.

'Gut punch': top shark expert quits Queensland advisory panel after LNP expands cull program

Mirage
News,

Exclusive: Colin Simpfendorfer's resignation from working group comes as conservationists lash expansion of lethal program they say 'does nothing to improve beach safety'

- Get our [breaking news email](#), [free app](#) or [daily news podcast](#)



Other members of the Queensland working group the shark expert had quit said the government's expansion of its lethal control program went against their advice. Photograph:

National

07 AUG 2025 1:00 PM AEST

Share

Qld Mackerel Changes Prioritize Short-term Gains

- Queensland Government proposes weakening Spanish mackerel recovery plan
- Sustainability target slashed from 60% to 48% despite long-term decline
- Decision undermines Reef protection commitments and sets a dangerous precedent

The Australian Marine Conservation Society (AMCS) has condemned proposed changes to Queensland's Spanish mackerel fishery as short-sighted and risky. The Government's decision to lower the sustainability target from 60% to just 48% of unfished levels walks away from key reforms and jeopardises the credibility of its Sustainable Fisheries Strategy.

"This sets a very dangerous precedent," said Simon Miller, GBR Fisheries Campaign Manager at the Australian Marine Conservation Society. "We have a key fish stock showing long-term declines over the last decade. Management of Spanish mackerel still requires a precautionary approach until we see stronger evidence of stock recovery."

The announcement includes increased commercial catch limits and limited changes for recreational fishers, despite a 2021 rebuilding plan committing to no changes until the stock reached 40%. Spanish mackerel were assessed as fished down to just 17% of their original levels as recently as 2021. However, a revised assessment now puts the stock at 34%, still well below sustainable levels.