

Parliamentary Debates (HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT FIRST SESSION 2022 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 16 February 2022

STATE ECONOMY — JOBS AND INVESTMENT 29. Mr K.J.J. MICHEL to the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade: I refer to the McGowan Labor government's efforts to create more jobs for Western Australians and attract more investment to the state economy. Will the minister update the house on the recent announcement of the Perdaman urea project as well as the Hastings Technology Metals Ltd Yangibana rare earths project, and outline the government's support for these job-creating projects?

Mr R.H. COOK replied: I thank the member for the question and I assure him that these projects are unequivocally good for the people of Western Australia. This is about downstream processing continuing to diversify our economy and provide a clean, green energy future.

The McGowan government welcomes the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility's decision to invest \$255 million in upgrades to common-user infrastructure that will support the proposed \$4.3 billion Perdaman urea project. The project is located 20 kilometres north-west of Karratha and will convert Western Australian liquefied natural gas into about two million tonnes of urea a year. Urea is a widely used form of fertiliser for food production. It is estimated that the Perdaman project alone will create around 2 500 jobs during construction and 200 operational jobs.

It was announced recently that a \$140 million NAIF loan was granted to the **Yangibana** rare earths project in the Gascoyne region. The Yangibana project, which comprises operations at both the Yangibana site and the Ashburton North Strategic Industrial Area near Onslow, will expand WA's capability in downstream processing of rare earth minerals. The company facilitating the project, Hastings Technology Metals, is on track to become Australia's second rare earths producer, following Lynas Rare Earths' Kalgoorlie processing facility project.

This is great and exciting news. This project represents \$650 million worth of investment and is expected to create 360 construction jobs and 250 jobs once operational. The Yangibana rare earths project aligns with the vision outlined by the WA government in its future battery and critical minerals industry strategy. I thank and commend the Minister for Mines and Petroleum for his stewardship of that strategy. 272 [ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 16 February 2022] This strategy will develop a world-leading, sustainable and value-adding battery and critical minerals sector that will provide local jobs, support economic diversification and benefit the regional communities in which they operate. Construction is expected to begin later this year, subject to government approvals. These are two great examples of how the McGowan government is committed to creating jobs right here in Western Australia. We are committed to diversifying the WA economy through new industries, coming from our strengths in mining and oil and gas, but also through value adding via downstream processing of these great opportunities. These are two terrific developments that will significantly increase the economic diversity of Western Australia.