

**North West
Minerals Province**



A Strategic Blueprint for Queensland's North West Minerals Province

SUPPORTING STRONG AND PROSPEROUS REGIONAL COMMUNITIES



**Queensland
Government**



MOUNT ISA
LATITUDE - 20 40 South
LONGITUDE - 139 30 East
BEARING AND DISTANCE FROM MOUNT ISA
ARE ON GREAT CIRCLE
DISTANCE

NORTH POLE

NOUMEA
2791km 98 00'

RIO de JANEIRO
19500km 93 52'

MERAUKE
6379km 3 04'

TOKYO
6270km 00 00'

SYDNEY
144 14'

BRISBANE
1576km 122 13'

HONG KONG
5493km 339 53'

CHARLEVILLE
919km 132 31'

MELBOURNE
2008km 163 09'

EQUATOR
2307km 00 00'

LONDON
15724km 324 22'

CHENGDU
6855 km 325 28'

Foreword

The Queensland Government recognises the significant contribution our resources sector makes in promoting employment, exports and economic growth. In 2015–16 the mining industry accounted for 7.2 per cent of the Queensland economy and 50 per cent of our state's overseas exports.

Combined with minerals processing and metals manufacturing, the resources sector also supported 79,300 direct jobs and many other indirect jobs across the state. While the resources sector will continue to be a source of comparative advantage and strength for Queensland's economic future for many years to come, recent challenges have highlighted the need for regional resources-based economies to also diversify their economic base.

Supporting regional Queensland has been a high priority for the Queensland Government, and the North West Minerals Province is no exception—as one of the world's richest mineral producing regions, delivering significant economic benefits to the state for decades. However, the significance of the mining industry and its remote geographic location has meant that it is one of the regions in Queensland that has been exposed to fluctuating prices in the commodities markets.

That is why in November 2015, the Queensland Government supported the establishment of a North West Minerals Province Taskforce to investigate the issues and opportunities impacting the Province and advise on a way forward for the region's future.

The Taskforce discussed the challenges to mining and exploration in the region, including declining ore grades and maturing operations, as well as opportunities to ensure mining in the region prospers into the future.

The Queensland Government would like to take this opportunity to commend the Taskforce for their commitment to supporting the future of mining in the region and for generating ideas on how government can work with industry and others to foster further exploration, project investment and development opportunities, as well as facilitate long-term economic and community resilience.

There are some positive signs emerging recently including recovering commodity prices, and new project developments. While there is expected to be a continued decline in overall Queensland metals production levels in the medium term, over the longer term global demand for base and precious metals and rare earths is forecast to increase.

This growth will be fuelled by the ongoing industrialisation and urbanisation of developing countries such as China and India and demand for innovative products, like renewable energy systems,

and more traditional applications, including transport infrastructure and other products.

Building on the important work of the Taskforce, this strategic blueprint sets out a platform through which the Queensland Government will collaborate with other levels of government, business and industry, and communities to support a smooth transition to a stronger and more diversified economy in the longer term, leveraging existing economic and community strengths.

This will be achieved through a focused effort on facilitating continued resources sector development, diversifying the regional economy and creating employment opportunities, and working with businesses, communities and other partners to continue to deliver integrated and appropriate services.



Dr Anthony Lynham MP
Minister for State
Development
Minister for Natural
Resources and Mines



Copper recovery – flotation process at the retreat bank, Copper Concentrator, Mount Isa Mines (image: Through The Looking Glass Studio)

Introduction

The North West Minerals Province is one of the world's richest mineral producing areas containing copper, lead and zinc as well as major silver and phosphate deposits and strong rare earth potential.

The Province's mining industry has been the primary driver for regional employment and economic growth. These activities also have important flow-on effects in the local economy, other regional areas and for the state economy, including through supply chain linkages to metal refining and port facilities in Townsville, and the employment of fly-in fly-out workers from Townsville, Cairns and South East Queensland.

However, the Province has recently faced some economic challenges. In recent years, a number of older, larger operations have closed, and exploration activity and investment in mining projects have been impacted by lower commodity prices. With global commodity prices starting to improve, there is an opportunity for renewal in the region's mining industries.

In response to these challenges, in November 2015 the Queensland Government announced a North West Minerals Province Taskforce to identify issues affecting the Province's mining industry and to help plan a strategic way forward. The Taskforce identified opportunities to support the mining industry into the future, including:

- more efficient utilisation of enabling infrastructure
- improving exploration and mining approvals processes
- encouraging the processing of waste material
- driving greater exploration success
- attracting new investment capital.

While the Taskforce primarily focused on issues impacting the mining industry, there is an opportunity to look more broadly and build on other economic strengths and opportunities to facilitate more diversified drivers of economic growth.

A holistic approach that leverages strong partnerships across local industries, communities and with key stakeholders, will be essential to build on the strength, prosperity and resilience of the Province over the long term.

A Strategic Blueprint for Queensland's North West Minerals Province is a platform for the Queensland Government to facilitate a strong future for the region that builds on its economic strengths and supports strong communities. The strategic blueprint leverages existing initiatives and includes more than \$39 million for new measures focused on three strategic priorities:

1. Facilitating continued resources sector development
2. Diversifying the regional economy and creating employment opportunities
3. Working with businesses and communities to deliver integrated and appropriate services.

Most importantly, the strategic blueprint aims to provide a strong foundation to galvanise integrated and ongoing partnerships with federal, state and local governments, business, industry and local communities, to support strong and prosperous regional communities in the Province.



Greg Douglas, Waanyi man, Groundsman for more than 30 years, Doomadgee State School (image: Harrison Saragossi)

Setting the scene

Regional profile

The Province, centred around Mount Isa and Cloncurry, was established in the 1920s when some of the world's richest deposits of copper, silver and zinc were first mined. A map of the region is provided at Figure 1.

Containing the majority of Queensland's mineral resources and operating as one of the world's largest mining regions, today the Province holds about 75 per cent of Queensland's base metal mineral endowment including copper, lead and zinc as well as major silver and phosphate deposits and rare earth potential. A current breakdown of key base and precious metals production values is provided at Figure 2.

The Province is renowned for its natural environment, characterised by a range of vegetation types and diverse landforms, geology, soil types and climatic variations. From November to March, summers are typically very hot, with periods of intense rainfall. Winters are usually cool and dry.

Mount Isa is home to the Province's largest mines, supporting industries and critical infrastructure. It serves as the primary administrative, commercial, industrial and service centre for North West Queensland as well as parts of the Northern Territory, and acts as the region's hub for delivery of a variety of health, community service, education and training programs and connections to industry skilling programs. Agriculture, forestry and fishing and service industries are also important.

It is also a regional transport hub that is serviced by rail, road and commercial air networks providing transport services locally as well as interstate, and forms part of the minerals corridor that transports mined resources from the Province to the Port of Townsville for export.

As depicted in Figures 3 and 4, the regional population has some unique features compared with the rest of Queensland and other regional and remote areas. Overall, it is a young population, made up largely of families. Unemployment rates, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and youth, are fairly high for the region and the wider Queensland Outback statistical division of which it is a component.

The Province has a significant population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly in Mount Isa, compared with other major resources regions across Queensland and the state average. Mining was the largest employing industry for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Province at Census 2011, accounting for 17.7 per cent of total employment for 15 to 64 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.¹

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of the Province is also particularly young. However, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Province are significantly less likely than the non-Indigenous population to participate in education, training or work, as depicted in Figure 4.

Non-completion of schooling impacts significantly on options for future training and pathways to employment. Non-participation in the labour market also confers significant disadvantages on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. More than two out of every five dependent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0 to 14 years old (41.1 per cent) is growing up in a household where no adult is working. The comparative rate for non-Indigenous children in the Province is 4.7 per cent. Children who grow up in households where at least one adult member is working are: less likely to be living in poverty; more likely to have higher rates of educational attainment; and more likely to be employed in the future.²

1. Queensland Government Statistician's Office, *Queensland Regional Profiles: Indigenous Profile for North West Minerals Province Region 2017*.

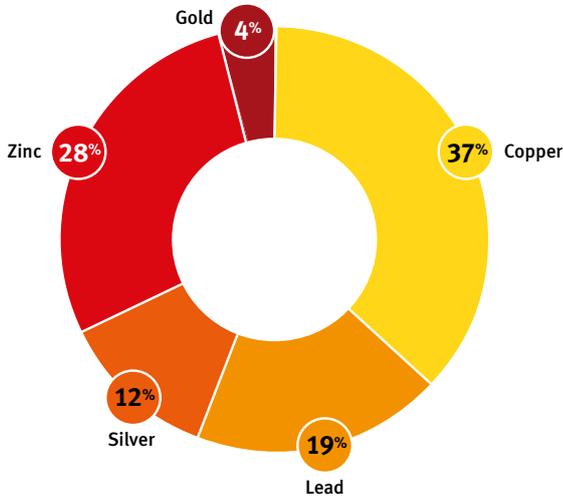
2. McCoull, F and Pech, J (2000) 'Trans-generational income support dependence in Australia: Early evidence', in Saunders, P (ed) *Reforming Australian Welfare*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne (page 111).

Figure 1: Geographical scope

The Province spans 10 local government areas: Burke Shire Council, Carpentaria Shire Council, Cloncurry Shire Council, Croydon Shire Council, Doomadgee Shire Council, Etheridge Shire Council, Flinders Shire Council, McKinlay Shire Council, Mount Isa City Council and Richmond Shire Council.

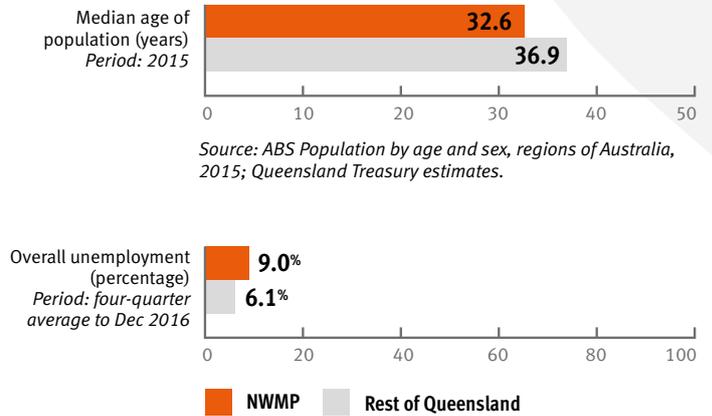


Figure 2: NWMP key base and precious metals (A\$ value) 2016



Source: AME Minerals Economics (Asia) Limited and AME Minerals Economics Pty Ltd, downloaded 10 March 2017. This data has been adjusted by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines utilising exchange rate data from the Reserve Bank of Australia (average rate for 2016).

Figure 3: NWMP vs Rest of Queensland – Median population age, and overall unemployment percentage



Source: ABS Population by age and sex, regions of Australia, 2015; Queensland Treasury estimates.

Source: Australian Government Department of Employment, Small-area labour markets Australia, various editions.

Figure 4: NWMP vs Queensland as a whole – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth snapshot

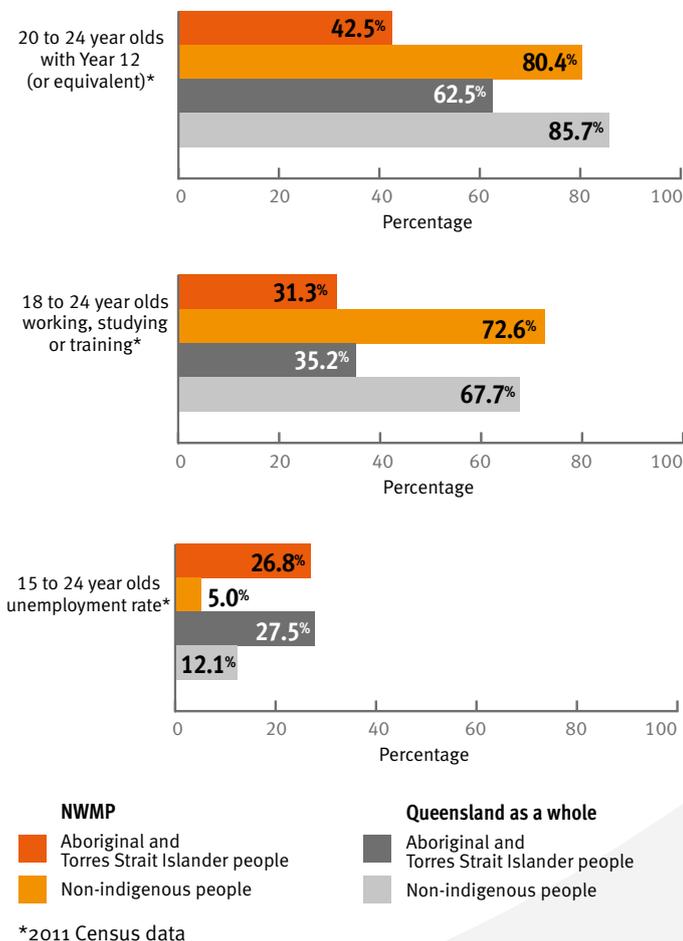
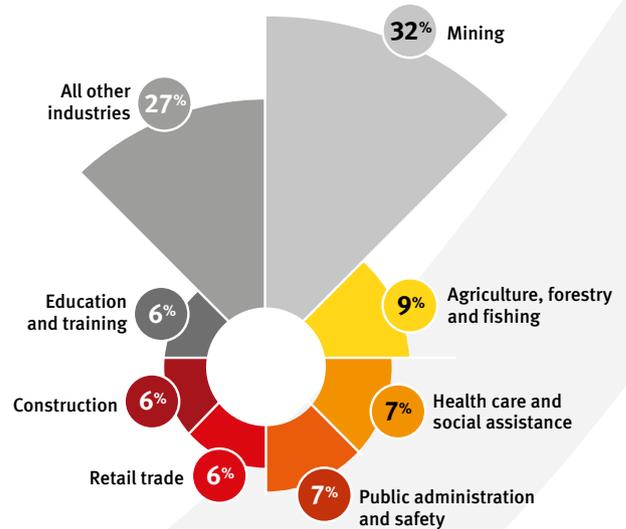


Figure 5: Industries with more than 1000 employees in the NWMP by location of workplace, 2011



Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Working Population Profile – W09 (place of work).

Quick facts – NWMP by the numbers



34,500
resident population[‡]



Region covers
~375,486
square kilometres

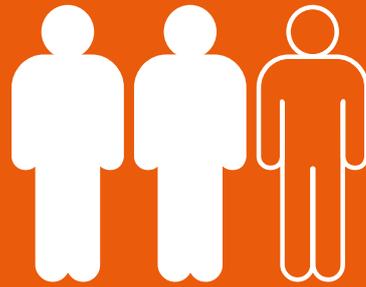


Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
people represent

22.5%

of the total population
compared to

4.4% across the
rest of Queensland*



Almost two thirds
or 22,000 of the total
resident population
live in Mount Isa[‡]

60%

of jobs directly or indirectly
supported by mining*



Median age of the
population is

32.6 years

compared to

36.9 years across the
rest of Queensland*

1.9% QLD

0.7% NWMP

Resident population grew at an
average rate of **0.7%** annually
between 2006 to 2016 compared
with **1.9%** for the rest of
Queensland in the same period[‡]

Approximately

\$6.6 billion

gross value add
in 2010–11



*June 2015 ‡June 2016

Key industries

The Province's remote location and rich mineral resources have contributed to the mining and mineral processing sector becoming the central source of employment and a significant contributor to economic growth in the region, as depicted in Figure 5.

Mining and minerals processing dominates in terms of employment, economic activity and gross regional product. Mining and minerals processing operations in the Province also have indirect supply chain impacts on zinc and copper refineries in Townsville as well as the Port of Townsville.

In 2014–15, just over one third or 37 per cent of the Province's workforce were employed directly in the mining and minerals processing industry. Further, in 2014–15, the industry also accounted for 67 per cent of the Province's economy³ and contributed \$215 million in royalties shared across Queensland⁴ as well as 11,110 direct and indirect jobs⁵.

Glencore's Mount Isa Mines (MIM), with separate copper and lead-zinc businesses, operates the largest mining and processing operations in the Province. Glencore's North Queensland copper operations sustain the Enterprise and X41 underground mines and copper

smelter in Mount Isa, Ernest Henry Mine near Cloncurry, copper refinery in Townsville, and port operations at the Port of Townsville.

Together, this integrated supply chain employs around 3150 people. Glencore's zinc operations provide work for around 1300 people in Mount Isa, including the George Fisher underground mine and associated processing and smelting activities. The vast majority of the MIM workforce live in the community. Other mines in the region largely source fly-in fly-out employees from Townsville, Cairns and South East Queensland.

Agriculture and tourism are the other key industries supporting the regional economy. The Province has a strong agricultural base including grazing, beef cattle production, horticulture and cropping. Outside of mining and minerals processing, the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector is the second largest employer in the Province (employing 8.8 per cent of the workforce⁶).

The broader outback Queensland region also accounted for approximately \$2.1 billion or 17 per cent of Queensland's gross value of agricultural production in 2014–15⁷. There are opportunities to increase agricultural production in the

Province to meet the growing international demand for Australia's 'clean' beef and horticultural products.

The tourism industry is also a key contributor to the economy. The Province offers a unique natural landscape, world-class fossil deposits, national parks and a strong Indigenous heritage. These natural assets are complemented by strong and vibrant communities that have paved the way for a growing tourism industry.

Events such as the iconic Julia Creek Dirt'n'Dust Festival and MIM Rotary Rodeo, carnivals and race days have also been attracting more and more national and international attention. Tourism and Events Queensland reports that in the broader outback Queensland region there was an annual average of over two million visitor nights over the three years to December 2016.

While the majority of travellers were domestic visitors, international travellers to the outback account for nine per cent of all visitor nights to the region.

3. Queensland Treasury.

4. Queensland Treasury.

5. Queensland Treasury.

6. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2011, *Working Population Profile*.

7. Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, *Value of agricultural production, Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry in the Queensland – Outback Region 2016*.



Strategic blueprint

This strategic blueprint has been informed by the work of the NWMP Taskforce and other targeted stakeholder consultation.

Looking ahead, the Queensland Government is committed to working closely with the mining industry, other businesses and industries, communities, local and federal governments and other key stakeholders to implement and refine the strategic blueprint over the coming years. This section outlines a way forward to deliver a strong future for the region that builds on its economic strengths and supports strong communities.

Our vision

Strong and prosperous industries, businesses and communities in the North West Minerals Province.

Our objective

This strategic blueprint aims to facilitate a smooth economic and social transition for businesses and communities in light of expected lower mining output levels in the medium term, towards a stronger and more diversified economy over the longer term, building on existing economic and community strengths.

The Queensland Government will seek to achieve these outcomes through continued facilitation of resources development, leveraging other viable economic diversification and employment opportunities, ensuring continued support for businesses, and supporting community liveability and wellbeing.

Our strategic priorities

Three strategic priorities have been identified as central to securing the future of the Province.

1. **Facilitating continued resources sector development**
2. **Diversifying the regional economy and creating employment opportunities**
3. **Working with businesses and communities to deliver integrated and appropriate services.**

Recognising the need to adopt a proactive response in the short term as well as the need to plan for the future, these priorities reflect a broad and balanced whole-of-government approach to create new economic opportunities and maintain and build greater community resilience.

Many of the actions in the short and medium term will take time to deliver significant outcomes for the Province and further collective actions may be needed over time to build on this platform.

As such, these priorities will be delivered across two phases.



Short-term actions
Six to 12 months
(2017–18)

Medium-term actions
Year 1 to Year 4
(2017–18 to 2020–21)

Strategic priority 1: Facilitating continued resources sector development

There is expected to be ongoing demand for the key commodities of the Province as important inputs to support the growing global economy, including the rapidly developing economies of China and India.

The mineral endowment of the Province is likely to continue to be demanded by global manufacturing and construction industries for a range of intermediate uses, including as key inputs into innovative and more traditional applications such as renewable energy, transport infrastructure and other industrial machinery and equipment.

The Queensland Government is focused on providing balanced, timely and scalable support for the continued development of the resources sector so that the Province can continue to prosper and transition.

This includes helping the sector through recent challenges posed largely by fluctuating commodity prices, declining ore grades and several larger mines maturing or reaching the end of their operational lifecycle.

The Queensland Government has recently announced the following significant measures to incentivise major resources-related projects in the Province:

- **Resources Development (Royalties) Policy**

The Queensland Government has adopted a new policy approach for major resources projects for the future development of the Galilee and Surat Basins and the North West Minerals Province. For major projects that have completed comprehensive environmental impact assessments at the state and federal level, the policy provides for negotiation of agreements with proponents of projects with significant regional employment, royalties and economic opportunity benefits for medium-term deferral of royalty payments. These agreements are to be subject to security arrangements and royalties being repaid in full including interest costs. Other key conditions include the provision of third party access

to infrastructure or other acceptable economic infrastructure to the state.

- **Discussions with Glencore**

The Queensland Government has been pursuing discussions with Glencore around incentives for its MIM copper smelting and mining operations. In December 2016, the government announced that through the *Jobs and Regional Growth Fund*, subject to certain conditions, Glencore MIM is being offered a \$15 million grant to assist it in re-bricking its copper smelter. Discussions are continuing on this proposal as well as the company's proposed Black Rock Open Cut mine proposal. Glencore has advised the government that it is continuing to review further investment on an annual basis.

This strategic blueprint includes almost \$30.9 million over four years in additional budget measures to support the resources sector. These measures outlined below are intended to provide tangible support to promote prosperity of the Province for many years to come.

Medium-term actions

Deliver minerals and natural gas geoscience exploration programs, new geoscience data systems and promote the region's investment potential

Exploration is critical to the future economic success of the Province, and maintaining a viable pipeline of future projects is contingent on the ability of explorers to find and prove up new major mineral deposits in the Province.

Currently, exploration in the Province faces a number of challenges. The next generation of large mineral deposits, both in the Province and around the world, will be deeper underground and have more complex geology and mineralogy, making them harder to find and process.

Additionally, much of the exploration in the Province is carried out by small companies whose success will depend on their ability to offset risk and attract capital. Explorers will need access to new, high-quality geological data that builds on the information gathered on the Province to date to identify the next major deposits.

The Queensland Government will invest \$27.1 million of the \$30.9 million for new resources industry measures over four years in a range of geoscience and investment initiatives as detailed below.

- **Improve pre-competitive geoscientific data**

To support mineral exploration, the Queensland Government will undertake mineral geophysics and geochemistry studies to better understand the highly prospective area east of Mount Isa and Cloncurry known as the Eastern Succession. This funding includes participation in the Australian Minerals Industry Research Association Undercover initiative.

These initiatives will generate an important new source of data and analysis to help explorers focus their efforts and more efficiently allocate capital and resources. The Geological Survey of Queensland (GSQ), which is a part of the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, will also apply the relevant expertise to analyse and interpret existing and new geoscience data through a minerals systems synthesis study, to identify new prospects for the industry that may be subsequently proved up into new projects.

- **Establish a Minerals Collaborative Exploration Program**

A four-year Minerals Collaborative Exploration Program will be implemented to provide grants for exploration activities that are undertaken in greenfield and high-risk areas of the Province. This program will build upon the groundwork of geochemical and geophysical studies to help industry to determine the potential size, character and extent of located mineral deposits.

By partnering with industry to drill for core samples in new areas determined to be geologically significant by GSQ, the Queensland Government will help companies determine if a mineral deposit is significant enough to be further investigated as a commercial opportunity.



Diamantina Minerals Province

The Queensland Government recently announced major geological discoveries by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines and University of Queensland experts of rare earths in the nearby Diamantina Minerals Province. These experts have uncovered evidence of platinum and gold as well as Rare Earth Elements used in advanced technologies from hybrid vehicle batteries to super-conducting magnets. The discovery brings a new understanding of mineral potential in a previously under-explored area that covers the copper, gold and platinum-rich Fifield in central New South Wales, through Queensland's north west country and up to the Merlin diamond mine in the Northern Territory.



Collaborative Drilling Initiative

The Minerals Collaborative Exploration program builds upon the success of the Queensland Government's long-running Collaborative Drilling Initiative that has supported almost \$27 million worth of exploration since 2006 in remote areas of the state, including in the Province. In April 2017, seven mineral and resource companies in North West Queensland received more than \$600,000 in grants under the Collaborative Drilling Initiative to support drilling projects for copper, lead, zinc, silver and gold. These companies included: Ripple Resources Pty Ltd, Teck Australia, Yappar Resources Pty Ltd, Footprint Resources Pty Ltd, Sector Projects Pty Ltd, Red Metal Limited and Mt Dockerell Mining.



Access to technical support and data for explorers

The Queensland Government recently announced a six-month trial that locates a hyperspectral core logging service in Mount Isa that is used to analyse drill core samples to extract as much data as possible and reduce the overall need for explorers to drill.

- **Develop new geological databases**

In addition to undertaking the groundwork to gather vital new data on the Province, the Queensland Government will develop new geological databases and improve business models for how geological data is accessed. It is important to have contemporary databases to make pre-competitive data, and industry's own data, available in a format that can be easily used and shared with industry. Improving access to large, detailed and flexible datasets that support detailed desktop analysis, facilitates a more targeted approach to costly on-the-ground exploration.

- **Initiate gas exploration in proximity to the Province**

The Queensland Government will undertake pre-competitive exploration and geoscience investigations of gas potential. The initial focus of the gas exploration package will be in Queensland's frontier or greenfield gas basins that have been identified as having significant gas exploration potential that fall outside the existing producing basins (Surat, Bowen and Cooper).

The Department of Natural Resources and Mines has identified several basins abutting the Province, including the South Nicholson Basin, Isa Superbasin, and Georgina Basin, as highly prospective for natural gas exploration.

- **Promote the investment potential of the Province**

While there is strong global demand for the minerals from the Province, Queensland continues to face strong international competition to attract investment into the minerals and energy resources sector. It is vital that information about the Province's prospectivity is being provided to capital markets and producers internationally.

The Office of the Resources Investment Commissioner, in conjunction with GSQ, will increase efforts to actively promote the Province and its many existing and potential mining opportunities.

A key component of these efforts will be an annual technology and investor forum held in Townsville that will showcase the latest research and technical developments, the commercial opportunities available to investors, and the expertise of Mining Equipment, Technology and Services (METS) companies active in the Province.

Queensland's METS sector supplies equipment, technical, safety and other services to both the mining and oil and gas industries. This includes education, mine rehabilitation and remediation, mining technologies and contract service provision (for example, scientific, technical and professional services).

The Queensland METS sector employs people across the state, including in resource regions such as the Province. Queensland has many METS companies leading their respective fields internationally in the development and commercialisation of new processes, technologies and products for the energy and resources industry.

Clarify and streamline approvals processes for explorers

It is important to ensure that mineral exploration work in the Province can take place in a timely, cost-effective and efficient manner. To facilitate this, the Queensland Government will provide greater assistance to exploration companies in navigating the approvals processes, particularly around native title (Indigenous Land Use Agreements) and cultural heritage.

The Queensland Government will also support stakeholder-led efforts to further streamline the land access processes in a manner that benefits all parties, for example, towards the development of standardised conduct and compensation agreements.

Investigate opportunities to re-process waste materials from tailings

The Queensland Government is investigating opportunities to re-process waste materials, including characterising

the endowment and technical barriers to remediating abandoned mines and tailings dams.

This will provide the necessary information to understand the barriers to extraction, including research and development issues, and develop policies to encourage mining companies to extract minerals from waste deposits as well as assisting in rehabilitation.

This may also contribute to the application of collaborative research between government and industry to investigate re-processing of and access to lower-grade minerals from tailings dams over the longer term.

Facilitate current projects in the investment pipeline

- **Provide targeted support for resources projects**

The current investment pipeline in the Province includes a number of smaller projects located further away from existing projects and critical infrastructure.

As part of the current focus on the resources sector in the Province, the Queensland Government will provide a greater level of support to facilitate these projects being developed successfully.

In particular, greater focus will be placed on streamlining and expediting approvals processes. To achieve this, the Queensland Government, through the Department of State Development, has recently established a project facilitation team to support near-term projects.

A key focus of the team is to streamline and assist in expediting approvals and access to Queensland Government contacts, and facilitate introductions with local companies and service providers. The team also identifies opportunities to progress projects and apply innovative technology including through approval pathways, resource availability information, site selection, workforce solutions and access to economic data and business tools.



Project support for the Capricorn copper mine and Dugald River zinc mine

The \$152 million project to refurbish and reopen the Capricorn copper mine, 125 kilometres north of Mount Isa, was recently granted 'prescribed project' status by the Queensland Government. Once re-opened the former Mount Gordon copper mine is forecast to produce 30,000 tonnes per annum of copper metal concentrate over an initial mine life of 10 years. Production is expected to commence later this year, generating approximately 90 jobs during construction and more than 200 direct operational jobs. The joint venture has committed to prioritising employment, suppliers and contractors from Mount Isa and other North West Queensland communities, including Cloncurry.

The \$1.4 billion MMG Dugald River zinc mine represents another exciting opportunity for North West Queensland. Dugald River is one of the world's largest and highest grade known undeveloped zinc-lead-silver deposits with a resource of 53 million tonnes. MMG's project that is 85 kilometres north east of Mount Isa has also been granted 'prescribed project' status and is due to start production in the first half of 2018. At peak production of 160,000 tonnes of zinc per annum, it would be one of the world's top 10 zinc mines. The mine will provide employment opportunities for workers in Cloncurry, Mount Isa and Townsville. Once fully operational the mine is expected to employ up to 400 site-based staff.

- **Leverage common user infrastructure opportunities**

Individual projects may be limited in their capacity to develop all the infrastructure required to support their development. Common user infrastructure provides the opportunity to drive down development costs for individual projects, with multiple users contributing to the development of, and benefiting from key forms of infrastructure required for mining and other projects. This may include transport infrastructure such as road, port and rail, utilities such as electricity, gas and water, or other types of minerals processing infrastructure.

The Queensland Government, through the Department of State Development, will invest a further \$3.4 million (of the total \$30.9 million for the new resources industry measures) over four years to conduct a detailed review of common user infrastructure opportunities, including existing infrastructure that is being under-utilised or not utilised at all, in areas where a number of prospective new mining projects are clustered close to each other.

Further, the Department of State Development will facilitate collaboration across parties to develop cooperative measures, such as methods to also better utilise current infrastructure.

The intent is to establish clearly defined processes and pathways to harness current levels of activity in a more proactive and collaborative way.

Support applied research and development in the Province

Innovation will be key to the Province thriving into the future. Research and development relevant to both resource and METS sector businesses will be vital to ensuring that when the next generation of large deposits is found through exploration efforts there is available technology to mine and process these resources.

In addition to examining a number of known technological challenges in the Province for processing mineral ores, the Queensland Government will provide an additional \$300,000 (of the \$30.9 million for the new resources industry measures) to facilitate the development of an industry-led research and development roadmap for minerals (excluding coal) in Queensland.

This roadmap will provide a strategic vision for future research and development efforts to ensure that each phase in the development of mineral projects is supported appropriately, though special focus will be placed on developing new technologies to support mineral extraction, processing and site rehabilitation.

Strategic priority 2: Diversifying the regional economy and creating employment opportunities

The Province has a strong regional economy built predominantly on mining and minerals processing. The Queensland Government is committed to maximising commercially viable economic development and job creation opportunities for the Province by adopting a whole-of-government diversification approach, with additional funding of almost \$5.5 million over four years for initiatives within this strategic blueprint priority.

Short-term actions

Develop a regional economic diversification strategy for North West Queensland

The Queensland Government will develop a long-term regional economic diversification strategy to leverage and identify development opportunities in key sectors including resources, agriculture, enabling infrastructure, tourism, and business and industry.

The strategy will explore ways to create the pre-conditions necessary for a more diverse range of drivers for the regional economy in order to:

- optimise continued local employment opportunities
- support the Province's liveability and ability to attract and retain workers and their families
- build the right skill mix for the jobs of the future
- foster the development of entrepreneurial capacity in the region
- examine cost-effective opportunities to enhance enabling infrastructure such as energy, water, ICT and transport.

The strategy will be developed through a whole-of-government approach and in collaboration with key stakeholders, local businesses and communities.

Key actions to be delivered in developing the strategy include:

- **Complete an infrastructure audit**

Enhancement and optimisation of the use of physical infrastructure such as energy, water, information and communications technology and transport is a key priority that will facilitate economic diversification opportunities for the Province.

The Queensland Government is committed to undertaking several review projects to clarify the issues and barriers to continued cost-effective private and public sector investment in the development and more efficient use of key infrastructure including rail connections, ports, various roads and Internet access.

- **Scope opportunities for increasing agricultural production**

The state's North West presents unique prospects for further agricultural development. In recognising these opportunities across the Province, the Queensland Government will be developing an integrated North West Queensland agriculture plan. The plan will focus on continuing to grow a sustainable and diversified agricultural sector, and will be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders across the supply chain and linked with the broader regional economic diversification strategy.

- **Investigate tourism opportunities**

The Queensland Government continues to deliver a number of programs that support tourism development in regional Queensland, including educational and school-based tourism, paleo-tourism opportunities associated with the Riversleigh and other fossil sites, ecotourism and drive tourism opportunities.

Comprehensive data and insights about visitor and non-visitor preferences and trends, as well as existing infrastructure and resources in the Province are needed to drive future growth of the tourism industry.



Office of the Chief Entrepreneur

There is evidence of an appetite in the region for expanding its entrepreneurial culture including in information technology related areas. Queensland's Chief Entrepreneur Mark Sowerby led a regional Queensland tour in early March 2017 with 15 events in 10 towns over four days. The tour brought together some of Queensland's leading business people to share their experiences with regional communities, including:

- Steve Baxter, Shark on Shark Tank and founder of River City Labs
- Patrice Brown, 2016 Telstra Business Women's Queensland Entrepreneur and founder of CQG Consulting
- Lucas Patchett, co-founder of Orange Sky Laundry and 2016 Young Australian of the Year
- Stephen Phillips, co-founder of We Are Hunted and CEO of Mawson Ventures.

Mount Isa was one of the regional communities that hosted an event attracting more than 60 locals from business, industry and government and inspiring the community to look at growing their own start-up ecosystem in the region.

As a result, two key locally-driven activities have been proposed, including a coding workshop to help develop new skills for young people in the community and a new co-working space to develop and grow local entrepreneurial talent.



Building our Regions

This is a \$375 million targeted infrastructure program over three years, from 2015–16, to provide funding to local governments for critical infrastructure in regional areas, while also supporting jobs, fostering economic development and improving the liveability of regional communities. A total of 13 projects across the Province have been funded through Building our Regions—allocating just under \$13 million and creating an estimated 70 plus jobs for the region in rounds one and two of the fund.



Regional infrastructure

The Queensland Government's \$180 million Significant Regional Infrastructure Projects Program supports significant infrastructure projects in key regional centres, including three projects within the Province:

- the McKinlay Multi-Purpose Health Service extension for aged care and refurbishment
- the Central West Hospital and Health Service Boulia refurbishment and mechanical upgrade
- infrastructure enhancement at Doomadgee State School.

Responding to community needs and providing increased economic opportunities for the Province, the announced funding for these crucial projects totals almost \$9 million and will support 22 jobs. The Queensland Government will continue to support significant regional infrastructure projects as needed.

Collecting information regarding visitors and tourism infrastructure will be central to assessing known opportunities associated with drive, paleo and ecotourism and as well as informing future opportunities and priorities.

In the first instance, the Queensland Government will undertake a visitor survey. The outcomes of the survey will inform and complement an audit of existing tourism infrastructure and other available research. These actions are expected to lead to the development of improved content for implementation, including key drive touring routes linking operators and tourists through digital platforms and printed materials to improve strategic connections and attract more visitors to the Province. The data and insights will also contribute to consideration, development and prioritisation of actions proposed by the regional economic diversification strategy.

- **Improve the digital presence of regional start-ups and established businesses**

There were 2485 registered businesses in the Province at June 2016, and 96 per cent of these were small businesses⁸. Many of these businesses are not taking advantage of existing telecommunications infrastructure that could be supporting increased business productivity.

The Queensland Government will develop a regional digital strategy to assist local businesses and remotely located start-ups and entrepreneurs maximise their capacity to access digital and telecommunications infrastructure.

Support key enabling infrastructure

The Queensland Government is committed to continuing to support feasibility work for a more stable and reliable track structure for freight services along the Townsville Eastern Access Rail Corridor. A critical determinant of regional

development into the future will be the provision and optimal use of key regional infrastructure to enable and unlock significant development potential.

The potential project involves construction of an eight kilometre rail freight line that will connect the North Coast Rail Line to the Port of Townsville. This project is expected to create greater capacity on this section of the Mount Isa rail system, which is a critical link between the Province and the Port of Townsville that is used to export goods.

Continue to support the development of the Jemena Northern Gas Pipeline

The Queensland Government remains committed to continuing to work in partnership with the Northern Territory Government and the energy and infrastructure company Jemena on the Northern Gas Pipeline. Once complete, the \$800 million gas pipeline will extend 622 kilometres from Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory to Mount Isa.

With 165 kilometres of the pipeline in Queensland, it will generate benefits through construction and operational jobs across the pipeline as well as supply chain opportunities and domestic gas supply. The project is expected to support up to 600 construction jobs and 30 operational jobs, with construction anticipated to be complete in 2018.

Support opportunities to leverage agriculture research projects

The Queensland Government has already committed \$1.5 million over three years to stimulate research activity to progress the development of new agriculture opportunities across North Queensland.

This funding will support opportunities to leverage industry-led research and development being undertaken through the Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia for increased agriculture production across the Province and other parts of North Queensland.

The Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia, currently being established in Townsville, is intended to provide a collaborative research platform to address challenges that have constrained agricultural and broader development in the north and includes a \$75 million commitment over 10 years from the federal government.

Medium-term actions

Build entrepreneurial capacity for existing and emerging sectors

The Queensland Government has been strongly focused on fostering the development of entrepreneurial capacity across the state and in the regions.

The government will facilitate access to existing state and federal government grants and other support programs, to build entrepreneurial capacity for existing and emerging sectors across the Province.

There are already many existing grants and programs available to provide support for business planning, financial counselling, incentives for redeployment and training, guidance for start-ups and engagement in e-commerce. This will mean leveraging existing Queensland Government programs such as:

- **One Stop Service** assisting landowners with the development proposals process for new and expanded agriculture development
- **Small Business Digital Grants Program** providing access to digital technologies and services to enable small business to work smarter, engage with the global economy and make the most of online business opportunities.

8. Queensland Treasury.



Ignite Ideas Fund: Australian Gulf Seafoods

Australian Gulf Seafoods (AGS), a Mount Isa based start-up business was awarded \$96,959 funding in Round 2 of the Ignite Ideas Fund (a commercialisation support fund for Queensland small and medium-sized enterprises) for their Carp' Crabs to Tiger Tables project.

AGS aims to supply some of the world's most ecologically friendly and sustainable seafood to international markets, including leading international hotels in Asia, with highly-prized mud crabs that are wild-caught in the mangrove-lined shallow waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria. The wild-caught mud crabs are comparable to Wagyu beef in international markets. They will be held 'live' in specifically designed natural ecosystem holding tanks that will replicate their natural environment before being exported. The company will also be exporting other wild-caught and processed seafood from the Gulf.

The Ignite Ideas Fund is part of the Government's \$405 million Advance Queensland initiative. Advance Queensland is working to set the scene for a future Queensland today. It is a transformational agenda for change designed to spur innovation-led economic growth by translating Queensland's great ideas into commercial success. It includes a range of programs designed to reinvigorate science and innovation to help create the well-paid, knowledge-based jobs of the future that will attract and retain world-class scientific and entrepreneurial talent.



Back to Work Regional Employment Program

In 2016 the Queensland Government established the \$100 million program, giving businesses the confidence to employ jobseekers in Queensland's regions and providing an economic boost to regions facing challenging times. The initiative provides support to employers to take on employees; support struggling regions; and support for jobseekers to build confidence, upskill and retrain for jobs in a more agile Queensland economy.

Under this program, as at 1 June 2017:

- 89 employees had been hired as a result of Employer Support Payments, representing \$388,000 in Employer Support Payments to 26 employers in the North West region
- 49 employees had been hired as a result of Youth Boost Payments, representing \$286,500 in Youth Boost Payments to 36 employers in the North West region.

The 2017-18 State Budget provided an additional \$50 million for the program, reflecting ongoing strong demand from the regions.



Skilling Queenslanders for Work Program

The Queensland Government has already committed \$240 million over four years to support up to 32,000 individuals into work through targeted skills and training programs. Since its reinstatement in 2015, just over \$133 million has been invested statewide under this program to provide nationally-recognised training, skills development and job opportunities to 28,023 disadvantaged Queenslanders, including:

- 751 community-driven projects worth approximately \$124 million that have been funded under the community-based training programs to assist 27,353 people
- \$7 million for 560 additional traineeships places allocated across 59 local councils under the First Start program
- \$2.2 million for 110 additional traineeships places allocated to 43 community-based organisations under the First Start program.

In the Province, the Queensland Government has committed \$1,273,200 to provide assistance to 174 disadvantaged local residents, including:

- \$985,700 to provide nationally recognised training, skills development and paid traineeship opportunities for up to 151 people
- \$287,500 in 2015–16 and 2016–17 to employ 23 young people or disadvantaged job seekers into a 12-month traineeship under the First Start program.

Optimise employment opportunities —facilitate access to training and development opportunities

The Queensland Government will work with the resources sector, local businesses, communities and individuals to facilitate access to existing industry and government employment resources, and identify training and development opportunities as the economic landscape evolves and the skills mix needed changes.

A more diversified economy will create new employment opportunities for individuals in the Province. The Queensland Government will coordinate opportunities across agencies, with training providers and other stakeholders to ensure the local workforce is optimised, now and into the future.

Prioritise youth employment

The Province has a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and young people in general, and opportunities to boost employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and for young people will be a priority. The Queensland Government will recruit an additional two Youth Employment Program coordinators to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 students in all school sectors across the Province who do not have an identified pathway into employment opportunities after school and link them to employment, further education or training opportunities.

A new Youth Navigator will also support both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous people to access education, training and employment opportunities.

A new operating model will be developed to support the seamless coordination of service delivery for young people in the region between the existing Youth Employment Program, supporting transitions to work for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and a Youth Navigator, supporting all young people in the broader service system.

Strategic priority 3: **Working with businesses and communities to deliver integrated and appropriate services**

The Province is well positioned to benefit from the increasing focus on investment in Northern Australia through the federal government's *Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia* as well as the Queensland Government's focus on North Queensland to drive economic development.

However, the Province's remoteness has posed challenges for coordinating efforts across different levels of government and with other key stakeholders, in the development and delivery of infrastructure as well as business and community oriented programs and services. A potential transition towards broader-based drivers of economic growth will mean changes to employment opportunities, population levels and government service demands for the Province.

As such, a coordinated, strategic approach across all levels of government, delivered in partnership with businesses and communities, will be critical to supporting industry, businesses and communities in the Province to prosper into the future.

The Queensland Government is investing more than \$2.6 million over four years in further initiatives under this strategic priority.

Short-term actions

Establish a new regionally-based Strategic Blueprint Implementation Team

The Queensland Government will establish a new, dedicated Strategic Blueprint Implementation Team in Mount Isa. The Implementation Team will be based within the Department of State Development and provide a focal point for coordinated effort, working with key stakeholders and other levels of government and service providers.

The Implementation Team's priorities will be to: facilitate economic diversification; work with business, youth and training organisations on employment and training services; maintain and build community resilience; and ensure appropriate service delivery.

The Implementation Team will leverage and build on the Province's strong linkages between and within communities, local governments and industry so that the strategic blueprint is effectively implemented and remains relevant and responsive over time.

The Implementation Team will provide information to businesses, communities and individuals about initiatives at all levels of government. For example, the Implementation Team will provide access to information about job search, retraining activities and financial support, and Queensland Government initiatives for businesses that support personal and community resilience and wellbeing.

Convene a North West Stakeholder Advisory Committee

The Implementation Team will convene an ongoing North West Stakeholder Advisory Committee to facilitate engagement and input across sectors on blueprint strategies and other issues of interest to the community. Members will comprise of representatives from industry, business, regional economic development groups, community leaders, Traditional Owners and local and federal government.

The Stakeholder Advisory Committee will provide a forum for engagement with a range of local and regional community, business and other government representatives on implementing the blueprint. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee will also garner community input on implementation and future directions as part of regular reviews of the strategic blueprint.

Host a 2017 North West Futures Forum

The Implementation Team will be responsible for hosting a North West

Futures Forum in late 2017. The forum will provide a focal point to capture the collective understanding of key stakeholders, political leaders and other invited speakers about opportunities for innovation and development particularly around the three blueprint strategic priorities.

The event will also seek to raise broader community awareness of the challenges and opportunities, and engage other stakeholders and the community in blueprint implementation.

Develop a North West community resilience strategy

Communities across the Province have a strong sense of cultural identity, and are attuned to the ups and downs of the resources sector. The community resilience strategy will build on the Province's strong mining identity. It will focus on enhancing the Province's capacity to adapt and evolve with the changing social and economic landscape as the Province transitions towards a more diverse economic base.

The community resilience strategy will be led through the Implementation Team and developed in consultation with businesses, communities and individuals across the Province. An integrated, long-term, place-based response will ensure a whole-of-government approach that is accessible and responsive to local needs.

Medium-term actions

Continue to improve integrated regional service delivery

The Queensland Government will ensure the appropriate and sustainable delivery of services to meet community needs and foster social and economic resilience.

Building on previous work, such as the Community Hubs and Partnerships program, the Queensland Government, through the Implementation Team, will review and target improvements to frontline services across the Province that meet community needs over time.



Focus on the North

Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia:

Considerable work has been undertaken across the Queensland Government to leverage opportunities in the White Paper for the benefit of North Queensland, particularly in the following key areas:

- Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility
- Roads investment
- Water infrastructure planning
- Cooperative Research Centre on Developing Northern Australia
- Northern Australia Insurance Premiums Taskforce.

Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland: Appointed in February 2015 to assist the Premier and other Ministers in delivering outcomes for the people of North Queensland and to work closely with industry, local governments and investors to maximise the benefits to the region from the federal government's *Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia*. Since her appointment, the Honourable Coralee O'Rourke MP, Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland, has extensively engaged with key stakeholders and individuals, hosted six business roundtables and is championing five priority areas to advance North Queensland, including the Province.

Advancing North Queensland: A plan that identifies five priority areas to develop and diversify North Queensland's economy, including: roads infrastructure; water and energy security; research and innovation; tourism, trade and investment; and the North Queensland Stadium.



Supporting community services

The Queensland Government recently announced \$14 million in funding for almost 700 community organisations across Queensland, including nine groups in Mount Isa, in the latest round of the Gambling Community Benefit Fund. This funding ensures these vital groups can purchase equipment and complete upgrades so they can continue providing valuable services to their local communities. In the Province, this includes a total of \$242,000 in funding for organisations such as North West Queensland Soccer Zone to upgrade lighting, Croydon Rodeo and Campdraft Association to construct a campdraft arena, and St Joseph's Catholic School in Cloncurry to upgrade the playground.



Ageing in place pilot project

As part of the *Advancing our Cities and Regions Strategy*, the Queensland Government is renewing and repurposing surplus and underutilised state property to deliver better community outcomes, create jobs and drive economic growth with a focus on regional liveability. Current projects in the Province include delivery of an Ageing in Place Pilot Project in Cloncurry to help older people stay in their communities and development of an 18-lot residential subdivision in Burketown to assist in delivering economic and community infrastructure in the area.



Next steps

The Department of State Development, through the Strategic Blueprint Implementation Team, will facilitate stakeholder input and annual reporting on implementation and ongoing adaptation of the blueprint.

This will be complemented by an ongoing whole-of-government interdepartmental committee based in Brisbane that will facilitate regular reviews of the strategic blueprint to ensure policy and program responses articulated in the blueprint remain relevant, proportional and effective in facilitating economic and social resilience for the Province's industries, businesses and communities.

Strategic priority 1: Facilitating continued resources sector development

Key deliverable	Timeframe	Delivery lead*	Delivery partners*
Deliver minerals and natural gas geoscience exploration programs, develop new geoscience data systems and promote the region's investment potential, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve pre-competitive geoscientific data • Establish a Minerals Collaborative Exploration Program • Develop new geological databases • Initiate gas exploration in proximity to the Province • Promote the investment potential of the Province 	●	DNRM	TIQ, DSD, explorers and miners
Clarify and streamline approvals processes for explorers	●	DNRM	DSD, DATSIP
Investigate opportunities to re-process waste materials from tailings	●	DSD	DNRM
Facilitate current projects in the investment pipeline, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide targeted support for resources projects • Leverage common user infrastructure opportunities 	●	DSD	QT, DNRM
Support applied research and development in the Province	●	DNRM	DSD, DSITI

*Refer to page 33 for acronyms.

● Medium term

Strategic priority 2: Diversifying the regional economy and creating employment opportunities

Key deliverable	Timeframe	Delivery lead*	Delivery partners*
Develop a regional economic diversification strategy for North West Queensland, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an infrastructure audit • Scope opportunities for increasing agricultural production • Investigate tourism opportunities • Improve the digital presence of regional start-ups and established businesses 	●	DSD	DTMR, DSITI, DAF, DEWS, QT, DILGP, DTESB, DSITI, DET, TIQ, TEQ, QTIC
Support key enabling infrastructure	●	DTMR	DILGP
Continue to support the development of the Jemena Northern Gas Pipeline	●	DSD	DNRM
Support opportunities to leverage agriculture research projects	●	DAF	DPC
Build entrepreneurial capacity for existing and emerging sectors	●	DSD	DSITI, DTESB, DAF
Optimise employment opportunities—facilitate access to training and development opportunities	●	QT	DET, DATSIP
Prioritise youth employment	●	DSD	DCCSDS, DATSIP, DET

*Refer to page 33 for acronyms.

● Short term ● Medium term

Strategic priority 3: Working with businesses and communities to deliver integrated and appropriate services

Key deliverable	Timeframe	Delivery lead*	Delivery partners*
Establish a new regionally-based Strategic Blueprint Implementation Team	●	DSD	DCCSDS, QT, DATSIP
Convene a North West Stakeholder Advisory Committee	●	DSD	–
Host a 2017 North West Futures Forum	●	DSD	DNRM, DSITI DPC
Develop a North West community resilience strategy	●	DCCSDS	DATSIP, DET, QH, QPS, DJAG, DHPW, DILGP
Continue to improve integrated regional service delivery	●	DSITI/DSD	QH, DET, DTMR, DHPW, DCCSDS, DILGP, DATSIP, DTESB, QPS, DJAG

*Refer to page 33 for acronyms.

● Short term ● Medium term



Appendix 1

Current key initiatives supporting strong and prosperous regional communities

Industry, community and all levels of government are making significant contributions to support the social and economic fabric of the Province. All partners will continue to play an important role in the future strength and prosperity of the Province to achieve the best possible outcomes for industry, businesses and communities.

Queensland Government initiatives to drive regional jobs and growth

A range of actions are already being delivered by the Queensland Government, including in partnership with the Federal Government, local governments and industry, to support regional communities, drive economic growth and create more jobs now and into the future.

Targeted support for the North West Minerals Province

- The Queensland Government has supported two industrial land developments to enable and drive private sector investment in Mount Isa. The Nordale Industrial Estate is a fully developed precinct supporting general industry. The Mica Creek Industrial Precinct is a growing estate, which supports major industry development. This includes \$5.8 million for the delivery of enabling infrastructure in the Mica Creek Industrial Precinct.
- The Queensland Government also provided \$200,000 each for the Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Zone and Gulf Savannah Development to deliver strategic projects that have economic benefits for communities from Charters Towers to Doomadgee. Examples of strategic projects underway include:
 - » Work to establish Stage 1 of the Cloncurry Biofuels and Waste Treatment Precinct, including preliminary planning, layout and initial design for a trial plantation of plant species as part of a waste treatment facility

- » Enhancing Digital Resilience and Digital Capability in the Gulf, including commissioning and completion of feasibility studies and detailed design for two telecommunications projects (Burketown to Normanton Fibre Link and Normanton to Karumba Fibre Link).
- In mid-2015, the Queensland Government amended the *Environment Protection Act 1994* to extend the life of the Mount Isa copper smelter and Townsville Copper Refinery to 2022, to protect local jobs and support the regional economy.

Diversifying and strengthening Queensland's economy

- **Jobs and Regional Growth Fund:** The Queensland Government's \$130 million Jobs and Regional Growth Fund commenced in February 2017. The fund's objective is to support regional growth and job creation by leveraging investment in regions with higher than average unemployment. The Outback Region, which includes the Province, is an eligible region under the fund.

The fund can provide one-off financial assistance ranging from \$100,000 to over \$10 million in either direct grants or relief of state charges on a case-by-case basis.

The fund will assist businesses to grow and expand in Queensland and targets businesses and sectors such as agriculture, resources, tourism, manufacturing and construction.
- **State Infrastructure Fund:** Now at \$2.2 billion, the State Infrastructure Fund is supporting the implementation of the State Infrastructure Plan and building the infrastructure needed to support economic growth and liveability into the future through a range of programs, including:
 - » \$300 million over five years for the Priority Economic Works and Productivity Program

- » \$180 million for the Significant Regional Infrastructure Projects
- » \$20 million over two years from 2016–17 for the Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline Program
- » \$200 million for the Works for Queensland Program in 2016–17
- » The remaining balance of the State Infrastructure Fund is to be allocated over the next three years.

Two of these programs have received a further injection of funds from the 2017–18 State Budget.

- » The Works for Queensland Program has received a \$200 million top-up to be \$400 million over three years from 2016–17. The program delivers funding for priority maintenance and minor works for local governments throughout regional Queensland. For the first stage, released in 2016–17, just over \$14 million was allocated under this program to fund 56 infrastructure projects across the Province. Local governments in the Province are eligible for further allocations under the following stages.
 - » The Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline Program has also received a top-up of \$10 million, and the total program budget is now \$30 million.
- **Accelerated Works Program:** Established in early 2016, the program was set up to support activity and employment in key regional areas. Under this program, the Queensland Government has committed \$12.6 million for Queensland Rail culvert renewals at Mount Isa and \$1 million for the refurbishment of the Mount Isa Fire Station.
- **Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2017–18 to 2020–21:** Comprises approximately \$21 billion over four years in investment for transport and roads infrastructure across the state. The program outlines more than \$280 million in investment, over four years, in the Department of Transport and Main Roads' North West district. Works in the North West

district include the following 2017–18 highlights:

- » Continue sealing sections of the Kennedy Developmental Road, between Hughenden and the Lynd
 - » Continue upgrading of culverts on the Flinders Highway, between Charters Towers and Richmond
 - » Improve various intersections in Mount Isa City on the Barkly Highway and the Diamantina Developmental Road, including the Maydowns Road intersection.
- **Advance Queensland’s Advancing Regional Innovation Program (ARIP):**
The program includes \$6 million over three years from 2016–17 to turn Queensland’s regions into vibrant hubs for innovation and enterprise. It will enable local start-ups, entrepreneurs, business leaders and key industries to collaborate closely and with government organisations to harness innovation and unlock business potential, strengthen existing industries and prepare regional Queenslanders for the jobs of the future.
The program enables a tailored approach to connecting local efforts, harnessing existing strengths and building regional capability. The intention is to build networks of innovative communities across the state that reflect the diversity of Queensland’s regions, draw people together and boost grassroots activities.
The 12 ARIP regions in Queensland will each be allocated funds up to \$500,000 designed to encourage collaborative, region-wide project proposals over three years.



State Infrastructure Plan

The State Infrastructure Plan (SIP) sets out the Queensland Government’s infrastructure priorities and vision for Queensland. The SIP is designed to guide infrastructure planning within Queensland Government agencies and policy responses to broader infrastructure opportunities and challenges. It also identifies the state’s infrastructure objectives and presents a clear set of directions to guide the government’s approach to the planning, delivery and operations of infrastructure.

Queensland infrastructure is adapting to economic changes affecting our industries and regions by responding to changing service needs. Underpinning these factors is increasing pressure on Queensland Government expenditure in the context of weakening government revenue. While there are high community expectations about the provision of infrastructure and service needs, there are competing priorities for limited funds.

Fundamental shifts in thinking, planning and delivery provides an opportunity for the Queensland Government to continue to partner and work cooperatively with local governments in the Province and across the state to develop and deliver shared priorities to optimise economic development opportunities for communities.



Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program

The Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2017–18 to 2020–21 (QTRIP) details the current transport and road projects that the Queensland Government plans to deliver over the next four years to meet the infrastructure needs of Queensland. QTRIP also includes investment under the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS), which underpins the Roads and Transport Alliance. The Roads and Transport Alliance is a cooperative governance arrangement between the Department of Transport and Main Roads, the Local Government Association of Queensland and local governments to invest in and regionally manage the Queensland transport network. The investment in TIDS is \$70 million per annum from 2017–18 to 2020–21.

**Leveraging Federal Government’s
Our North, Our Future: White Paper
on Developing Northern Australia**

- **Northern Australia Roads Program:** \$600 million to enable upgrades to high priority roads in Northern Australia, which are essential to the movement of people and freight to support the North’s economic development. In the Province, the Queensland Government has secured funding for:
 - » Flinders Highway (Charters Towers—Richmond) culvert upgrades (\$25 million)
 - » Barkly Highway (Cloncurry—Mount Isa) intersection upgrades in Mount Isa urban area (\$6.2 million).
- **Northern Australia Beef Roads Program:** \$100 million to improve the resilience of cattle supply chains across northern Australia by upgrading key cattle roads, improving safety, whilst reducing vehicle operating and maintenance costs, and seasonal road closures. In the Province, the Queensland Government has secured funding for:
 - » Richmond – Croydon Road progressive sealing (\$4.2 million)
 - » Cloncurry – Dajarra Road progressive sealing (\$3.2 million)
 - » Richmond – Winton Road progressive sealing (\$4.7 million).
- **National Water Infrastructure Development Fund:** \$59.5 million to fund feasibility studies for proposed water infrastructure across Australia, with \$30 million specifically set aside for projects in Northern Australia. In the Province, Queensland proponents, Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Zone (MITEZ), secured funding of \$1.7 million to undertake the North West Queensland Strategic Water Storage Feasibility Study. The study is assessing additional water storage and distribution options within the Cloncurry/Mount Isa region, with a focus on the Cave Hill Dam site near Cloncurry, that have the potential to provide additional water for the urban, mining and/or agriculture sectors.

**Queensland Government
initiatives aimed at strengthening
community resilience**

The Queensland Government is strongly committed to supporting social development and community resilience in regions across the state. This is evidenced by a range of actions being delivered to support and build resilient communities in regions across the state, including in the Province.

**Diversifying and strengthening social and
community resilience across Queensland**

- **2016–18 Cohesive Communities Action Plan:** Contributes to the building of safe, caring and connected communities, through partnership actions aimed at strengthening community cohesion and resilience, reducing marginalisation and addressing anti-social behaviour and behaviour that may lead to violence or physical harm to others.
- **Queensland Youth Strategy:** Developed with young people front and centre as key informants, this strategy will shape the government’s policies and actions to meet the changing and diverse needs and goals of young people in Queensland, both today and into the future.
- **Age-friendly community strategic direction and action plan:** Outlines priorities, initiatives and services aimed at enabling people of all ages to actively participate in community life. It supports older people to be free from age-related barriers to participation and the contribution of seniors is valued.
- **Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy:** Sets the direction for collaborative action to end domestic and family violence in Queensland encouraging partnerships between government, community and business. It includes a shared vision and set of principles to guide action, including a staged 10-year plan on how we will get there.

- **Queensland Multicultural Policy ‘Our story, our future’:** Sets priorities and focuses on achieving culturally-responsive government policy, services and programs; inclusive, harmonious and united communities; and improved economic opportunities.
- **Queensland Women’s Strategy:** Provides a framework for government, the private sector and the wider community to take significant action to achieve gender equality, respect for women and promote and protect the rights, interests and wellbeing of women and girls.
- **Queensland Corrective Services Work Program:** One of the most successful prisoner rehabilitation programs in Australia, the program provides regional communities with a valuable source of labour, and prisoners with an opportunity to make reparation to communities and gain valuable skills.
- **The Department of Justice and Attorney General (Youth Justice):** Employs a Community Capability and Capacity Officer to work with remote communities to harness opportunities for young people and families known to the Department. Youth Justice staff also assist communities to address issues of concern and whole-of-government engagement and responses with Indigenous communities.
- **Housing Strategy:** A new 10-year Housing Strategy, announced in June 2017, aims to provide more Queenslanders with access to a safe, secure and affordable home that helps increase their capacity to participate in the social and economic life of the state. It recognises that housing is a foundation for connected and resilient communities. The Housing Strategy also ensures that those most in need are provided with targeted early interventions, flexible packages of support, social housing and homelessness services, and responsive, holistic housing services.

Targeted support for the North West Minerals Province

- **Child, Family and Community Services:**

\$15.7 million in 2016–17 to fund organisations within the North West for various child, family and community services, including:

- » Community/neighbourhood centres; drought support; family support; child protection; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services; counselling; domestic and family violence; youth support; emergency relief; information, advice and referral; rest and recovery; and a social connectedness program for culturally and linguistically diverse people.
- » Additional services are provided to residents including **Disability and Community Care Services** (\$1.8 million in 2016–17), and services delivered from elsewhere such as telephone counselling services.

- Mount Isa is a trial site for an integrated response to **domestic and family violence** with government working in partnership with the community and the domestic and family violence service sector to respond to the needs of victims of domestic and family violence.

- The Department of Housing and Public Works provides housing and homelessness services within the Province, including:

- » Home Assist Secure services, providing minor repairs and home maintenance, to help eligible private homeowners who are elderly or with a disability, so they can continue to live safely and securely in their home
- » Specialist Homelessness Services, including supported accommodation for women and children escaping domestic violence, families and youth
- » Social and affordable housing to eligible clients through public and community housing providers and working closely with the community housing sector.

- Queensland Health will provide funding of approximately \$160 million in 2017–18 for the **North West Hospital and Health Service** (HHS) to improve health outcomes of people and communities across North West Queensland. This is undertaken primarily through the provision of inpatient, outpatient, primary care, emergency and sub and non-acute services, and is inclusive of mental health and community-based services that provide responsive and comprehensive healthcare services across the communities for which the HHS is responsible.

A secondary impact is the significant contribution made to these North West communities through the employment opportunities that arise as a result of the provision of healthcare and social services.

- Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) Work Program has work camps at Boulia, Julia Creek and Winton which are run by the Townsville Correctional Centre. Prisoners on this program perform a multitude of tasks, including maintenance of fences, cemeteries, playgrounds and showgrounds, and participate in ongoing general maintenance projects.

QCS has a Probation and Parole District Office in Mount Isa and covers a wide range of locations from Mornington Island to Birdsville and Camooweal to Hughenden.

- The Department of Justice and Attorney General provides an annual grant of \$117,500 to the North West Queensland Indigenous Catholic Social Services for Community Justice Group (CJG) services. These services work towards reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders and victims within the criminal justice system both in the Mount Isa Murri Court and the Mount Isa Courts more broadly. The CJG aims to achieve this through the delivery of, or referral to, culturally appropriate support services to improve quality of life and increase cultural understanding in the courts and the wider criminal justice system.

Local initiatives to grow the economy and strengthen social and community resilience

The Province is also supported by a range of local and regional initiatives aimed at achieving economic growth, building community and employment capacity and enhancing community wellbeing. Examples include:

- Local government and regional development organisations develop and implement a range of strategies and projects aimed at growing and diversifying the regional economy; providing employment opportunities for residents and building greater social and economic resilience.
- The largest regional mining employer, Glencore, funds partnerships with regional and other organisations to deliver capacity building or environment programs including around Indigenous employment, training, mentoring and youth leadership. Since 2004, Glencore has invested over \$36 million in a range of local community initiatives across North Queensland.
- Incitec Pivot Limited, a global diversified industrial chemicals company supporting the mining industry in the Province, provides matching funding for employee donations and fundraising efforts up to a total of \$2000 per initiative, and supports Traditional Owners, employment and cultural awareness programs.
- Indigenous organisations, including the North Queensland Land Council and Traditional Owners, provide a range of legal, land administration, employment, educational and cultural and heritage preservation support services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the region.

Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
DAF	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
DATSIP	Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
DCCSDS	Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
DET	Department of Education and Training
DEWS	Department of Energy and Water Supply
DHPW	Department of Housing and Public Works
DILGP	Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning
DJAG	Department of Justice and Attorney-General
DNRM	Department of Natural Resources and Mines
DPC	Department of the Premier and Cabinet
DSD	Department of State Development
DSITI	Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation
DTEBSB	Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games
DTMR	Department of Transport and Main Roads
GSQ	Geological Survey of Queensland
METS	Mining Equipment, Technology and Services
MIM	Mount Isa Mines
NWMP	North West Minerals Province
QPS	Queensland Police Service
QRC	Queensland Resources Council
QH	Queensland Health
QT	Queensland Treasury
QTIC	Queensland Tourism Industry Council
TEQ	Tourism and Events Queensland
TIQ	Trade and Investment Queensland

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Rodeo, Mount Isa (image: Tourism and Events Queensland)