



## Media release

Minister for Natural Resources and Mines  
The Honourable Andrew Cripps

### Committee delivers blueprint for uranium industry

An independent committee has today delivered a comprehensive report outlining how a uranium industry should be re-established in Queensland.

Natural Resources and Mines Minister Andrew Cripps received 40 recommendations from the Uranium Mining Implementation Committee, which was established to examine the responsible development and operation of uranium mining in Queensland.

“The Committee’s report provides a blueprint for the development of a best-practice uranium mining industry in Queensland,” Mr Cripps said.

“This morning I presented the report to the Premier and my Cabinet colleagues, and the State Government will now review and consider the committee’s recommendations.

“The Newman Government is committed to ensuring that when this industry recommences in Queensland, it is governed by world’s best practice environmental and health and safety standards.”

Mr Cripps said uranium exports had the potential to earn Queensland billions of dollars and provide hundreds of jobs and economic benefits, particularly in rural and regional communities.

“This industry will also open the door for Indigenous Queenslanders to benefit from economic opportunities, including better access to training and jobs,” he said.

Chairman of the Uranium Mining Implementation Committee, Central Highlands Councillor Paul Bell AM, said a well-regulated uranium mining industry would pave the way for significant economic activity in regional Queensland.

“This report makes practical recommendations about important issues including environmental management and protection, health and safety, economic and community development, and the safe transportation of uranium,” Mr Bell said.

“We are confident that the recommendations within this report not only represent best practice, but are responsive to the needs of the regions where uranium mining is most likely to take place.”

Mr Cripps said the Committee’s recommendations include:

- A coordinated approvals process for uranium mining by referring all proposals to the Coordinator-General’s ‘coordinated project’ process
- Assessment of uranium mines for the purposes of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* should be undertaken according to the bilateral agreement between the Queensland and Australian Governments
- Uranium export should facilitate the use of existing ports in Darwin and Adelaide, and use existing shipping lanes

- Specific mine safety and health guidance documentation must be developed to ensure best standards are maintained at all stages of uranium exploration, mining, and ore milling and processing
- Environmental model conditions specific to uranium mining must be developed.
- The implementation of a training and business development initiative in the form of a trust arrangement with a government funding contribution to assist Indigenous Queenslanders to access benefits from uranium mining
- The application of a five per cent royalty regime to uranium, with the possible use of a higher rate once the price of uranium reaches a certain higher threshold. It should also offer a new mine a concessional royalty rate of 2.5 per cent for the first five years of a mine's life.

Mr Cripps said an inter-departmental committee of senior officers from a number of State agencies would be formed to develop the Newman Government's response to the Committee's recommendations.

"This group will submit a draft report to the Resources Cabinet Committee outlining an implementation strategy for the recommendations, including identification of any budget implications and necessary legislative changes," Mr Cripps said.

"We will also establish a Uranium Mining Stakeholder Committee comprising representatives from local governments, Indigenous groups, industry, environment and natural resource management groups in accordance with the report's recommendations.

"I wish to thank Councillor Paul Bell AM and the Committee members for their hard work and for this timely and comprehensive report."

The *Uranium Mining Implementation Committee* report is available at: [www.dnrm.qld.gov.au](http://www.dnrm.qld.gov.au)  
( <http://www.dnrm.qld.gov.au/> )

**[ENDS] 18 March, 2013**

**Media contact:** Jane Paterson 0417 281 754 or Paul Sutherland 0428 868 237

**Further Information:**

- Uranium mining, production and export already occurs under strict environmental and safety regulations in South Australia and the Northern Territory. Western Australia's first uranium mine is awaiting Federal approval.
- All Australian uranium exports are regulated by the Federal Government under Australia's network of bilateral safeguards Agreements
- Uranium was last mined in Queensland in 1982 at the Mary Kathleen mine in North West Queensland
- The mining of uranium was banned by the Goss Labor Government in 1989
- The ban on uranium mining did not extend to exploration for uranium, which has continued during this time under exploration permits for minerals (EPMs)
- Most of the known uranium deposits in Queensland are found in North West Queensland, with Australia accounting for over 30 per cent of the world's known uranium deposits
- The estimated value of identified uranium deposits in Queensland is \$10 billion