

The Queensland Cabinet and Ministerial Directory

Hydrogen-powered freight trains on the Aurizon for the renewable State

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JOINT STATEMENT

Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics Infrastructure

The Honourable Dr Steven Miles

Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement

The Honourable Mick de Brenni

Queensland's pursuit of the renewable energy opportunity continues at pace with the announcement by Aurizon and Anglo American that they will undertake a study into using hydrogen-powered trains for bulk freight.

Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development Steven Miles said the feasibility study will explore whether hydrogen fuel cell and battery hybrid power units could be used in heavy haul freight rail operations.

"The Feasibility Study will focus on the potential deployment of Anglo American's hydrogen power technology on Aurizon's Moura rail corridor and also the Mount Isa Rail corridor," Mr Miles said.

"The Moura corridor operates between Anglo American's Dawson metallurgical coal mine and the Gladstone Port, and the Mount Isa rail corridor operates between the North West Minerals Province to Townsville Port, via Aurizon's Stuart Terminal.

"The announcement is more proof that Queensland is committed to capturing every section of the renewable energy value chain."

As part of its commitment to carbon neutral by 2040, Anglo American has taken a global lead in the development of green hydrogen solutions for its ultra-class 290 tonne payload mine haul trucking fleet.

Anglo American's unique combination of powertrain technologies, designed to operate safely and effectively in real-world mine conditions, will displace the use of the majority of diesel at its mining operations.

Mr Miles said Queensland is perfectly positioned to be the world's renewable energy superpower.

"This project is more proof of that future. Where we use cheaper cleaner energy to power Queenslanders' lives and to make the equipment the world needs as we move towards more decarbonisation," he said.

"Imagine new economy minerals which can be used to make batteries to store renewable energy, being moved from the North West Minerals Province to Townsville, on a train powered by hydrogen made from Queensland sunshine."

Minister for Energy Renewables and Hydrogen Mick de Brenni said the project showed yet again the way renewable energy and the burgeoning hydrogen industry meant more jobs in more industries for more Queenslanders.

“Projects like this are important because they enable domestic demand and create an ecosystem for green hydrogen,” Mr de Brenni said.

“Transport accounts for 14 per cent of emissions, and is the fastest growing sector for emissions.

“However, we recognise that transport can lead the emissions reduction push if we move quickly with initiatives like this one.

“The Palaszczuk Government welcomes today’s announcement as it is making sure Queenslanders and local businesses are at the front of the queue building the skills needed for the hydrogen industry and the thousands of jobs it will create.”

Tony O’Neill, Technical Director of Anglo American, said the agreement with Aurizon marks the first time their hydrogen power technology could be tested beyond the existing mine haul truck program.

“Displacing our use of diesel is critical to eliminating emissions at our sites and along our value chain. We believe that our innovative hydrogen-led technology provides a versatile solution, whether for trucks or trains or other forms of heavy duty transport,” he said.

Aurizon is Australia’s largest rail freight company, with the decarbonisation of its supply chains at the centre of its target to reach net zero operational emissions by 2050. Aurizon has also commenced research & development for battery-powered trains with a number of industry parties and Australian universities.

“Hydrogen offers enormous opportunity in decarbonising and continuing to improve the competitiveness of Australia’s export supply chains,” Aurizon’s Managing Director & CEO Andrew Harding said.

“This is especially true for bulk products underpinning the Australian economy including minerals, agricultural products and fertilisers, industrials and general freight.”

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