

NET ZERO EMISSION MINING WA CONFERENCE

Statement by Minister for Energy

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Energy) [9.04 am]: It is with great pleasure that I stand today to inform the house of the success of the Minerals Research Institute of Western Australia's inaugural Net Zero Emission Mining WA conference. Representatives from across industry and academia met last week to discuss how they can reduce their carbon footprint, lower energy costs and improve energy efficiency. My colleagues Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson, Minister for Environment; Climate Action, and Hon Alannah MacTiernan, Minister for Regional Development; Hydrogen Industry, also attended. The ministerial panel discussion was chaired by Professor Peter Klinken, WA's Chief Scientist.

As the world rapidly shifts towards decarbonisation, demand for mineral resources to support new energy technologies places Western Australia at the forefront. Cleaner energy solutions such as wind, solar and new battery systems are already calling on our state's mineral resources. Since 2010, the average amount of minerals needed for a new unit of power generation capacity has increased by 50 per cent, as the share of renewables has risen. The International Energy Agency anticipates mineral demand to support clean energy technologies will rise by at least four times by 2040. An electric car requires six times the mineral inputs of a conventional car. An onshore wind plant requires nine times more mineral resources than a gas-fired power plant. The energy transition will have a significant impact on mining and the demand for minerals. The McGowan government is focused on positioning our state at the forefront of innovation so we can take advantage of global market trends.

Our world-class resources industry is already responding to this thematic. I note an increase in nickel exploration activity and other minerals in the battery space. We are supporting the mining sector by allocating an additional \$6 million in funding for MRIWA over the next four years to continue to support minerals research. I am particularly excited by research into sustainably processing Western Australian iron ore to create green steel. This million-dollar investment honours the commitment we made before the election, and it will help put us at the forefront of innovation in the industry. An energy industry development team will be established to work with local manufacturers and mining companies to accelerate the transition to renewable energy supply on mine sites. These investments strengthen our state. They support our transition to net zero by 2050. They diversify our economy, and they help create the WA jobs of the future. On behalf of the McGowan government, I thank everyone who participated in the inaugural MRIWA Net Zero Emission Mining WA conference.